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THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER

THE "closed shop" has suddenly become a national issue. Mr. Charles Dukes has given T.U.C. backing to the claim *in principle*, but took the opportunity last Sunday to re-emphasise the Trade Union leaders' condemnation of unofficial strikes as a means of enforcing it. Despite his words the unofficial movement is spreading as quickly as the squatters' movement and for the same disturbing reason—the sense of frustration of the Socialist rank and file.

For over a year now the people of this country have accepted the continuance of wartime austerity with forbearance. Those who voted Labour believed that the Government would be able to create a new kind of Britain, if only the Labour Movement showed self-discipline and solidarity in accepting the inevitable irks and restrictions of the transition period. Many who voted Conservative were willing to wait and see what the new Socialist world looked like before condemning the verdict of the polls. Last summer no Government in the world could reckon on such a widespread spirit of good will as Mr. Attlee's.

That was a year ago. Now the mood shows signs of changing. The Government is judged, not by its electoral majority, but by its actions. Recovering from defeat, the threatened capitalist interests are strenuously defending the old order which is still, under the Labour Government, the established system. They won their first major victory when Mr. Bevin last summer accepted the principle of continuity of foreign policy and agreed with their view that Communism is a more dangerous enemy than reaction. Mr. Wilmot's retreat in face of the resistance of the Iron and Steel Federation last month was their second major victory—this time on the Home Front.

But long before Mr. Wilmot's statement there were indications that all was not well. Once the impetus of the election results was exhausted, the Government, in face of stiffening opposition, should have relied on the motive power of the Labour Movement to put its programme through. Socialism means, for the Labour Movement, not merely the existence of a Labour Government passing Socialist measures, but also Socialist administration. The rank and file trade unionist judges the Government less by its Parliamentary record than by its effect on his own working conditions and home life. Does it make the bureaucratic machine work for him instead of against him? Does it remove the atmosphere of the Means Test from Unemployment Relief? Does it redress the outrage that the poorest get no benefit from children's allowances? Does it make available army hutments for temporary housing? Does it stop the inter-departmental buck-passing which drives the ex-soldier crazy when he tries to set up shop on his own? Does it, in brief, change the atmosphere of frustration which is his chief memory of the years between the wars and the thing against which he voted in the general election?

Fourteen months after Mr. Attlee took office this atmosphere of frustration by a hostile bureaucracy still exists. The impression is growing that we witnessed not the beginning of a new Socialist dispensation, but merely a change of Government. That is not what the people voted for a year ago.

The unauthorised strikes and the squatters' movement are blind and instinctive reactions to this failure. They are the consequence of a suspicion that the Government is more afraid of rousing the animosity of vested capitalist interests than of disappointing the reasonable demands of the Labour Movement. Granted the enormous difficulties which face the Government, organised Labour has the feeling that its leadership is succumbing to those difficulties instead of overcoming them.

Directly that feeling becomes widespread the old anarchic tendency to "direct action" asserts itself. The dynamic which should be directed into support for a Socialist leadership dissipates itself in unco-ordinated campaigns on what are really side issues; and these campaigns divert the Government from what should be its central purpose.

At the beginning of this second year of office Mr. Attlee, like every other Social Democratic leader, is faced with the problem of power. If he is afraid of using power he will become the head of just another Government of the traditional sort, appeasing the contending forces by concessions now to one group, now to another. If this happens he must expect a steady increase of direct action, the growth of a militant Left, and the ultimate risk of a split in the Party which would renew Conservative hopes of a National Government. But if, as we believe, the Prime Minister wishes to lead a United Labour Movement, he must dissipate the growing sense of frustration among his supporters and convince them that he is not weakening in the fight for a Socialist Britain. There is an immense latent dynamic in the Labour Movement, but it can only be evoked by a leadership which gladly accepts the challenge of the old order and welcomes the struggle for power.

Awaiting Mr. Molotov

Indications from Paris are that the meeting of the Big Four is likely at least to result in a speeding up of the Conference. The voluminous amendments will be sifted by the Big Four's deputies before they come up for discussion; and, in so far as the questions on which the four Foreign Ministers reached agreement are concerned, the decision of the Big Four to stick together on what they have agreed should act as a brake on the anxiety of delegates to re-open every settled issue. There is, however, a big loophole in the Big Four's unanimity. They have decided on independent freedom of voting on all questions on which the Foreign Ministers failed to reach complete agreement—and these include not merely commercial access to the Danube Valley but major points in the plan for a Free Territory of Trieste. Much turns on the tenour of the instructions which Mr. Molotov will bring with him back from Moscow. In some quarters the view is held that Russia, impressed by American toughness towards Yugoslavia and the U.S. naval demonstration in the Mediterranean, will beat a temporary retreat. On the other hand, the retirement of Mr. Litvinov and the signs of a tightening of Party and national discipline in the U.S.S.R. scarcely support this view. Toughness is not an American monopoly.

Mr. Nehru's Government

The new Viceroy's Council is in effect a Cabinet, bound by collective responsibility, with Nehru as Premier. The post of Home Member, in charge of law and order, goes to Vallabhai Patel, the organiser and "strong man" of Congress. Finance falls to the economist, Dr. John Matthai, who was a director of Tata's and one of the authors of the "Bombay plan." Defence goes to the Sikh, Balder Singh. Amid the famine Dr. Rajendra Prasad, a sober constructive mind, who knows village life intimately, is a good choice for the portfolio of Food. At the head of Industries, Mr. Rajagopalachari faces the other urgent social problem of unemployment. Congress, in charge of eight of the eleven provinces as well as the Centre, is evidently closing its ranks in a new spirit of discipline, for the chief rebel and revolutionary in its ranks, Jai Prakash Narain, the leader of its Socialist Wing, has agreed to join its Working Committee. Its prestige has been enhanced by its assumption of responsibility, while that of the Muslim League has been depressed by its negative attitude. We wish the new Council well, the main doubt in our minds being whether the influence of Patel and the business interests behind him may not make it dangerously antipathetic to the claims of organised labour.

French Socialists Hang Together

The Annual Convention of the French Socialist Party, whose inherent weaknesses are analysed by Mr. Zilliacus, M.P., in an article on a later page, has resulted in a change in the composition of the Executive, but not of fundamental policy. The Party has looked, but not moved, to the Left; united only in the common fear and dislike of the Communist Party felt by both its Left and Right wings, it has held together in a middle-of-the-road position. From that stance it continues in its final, unanimously adopted resolution to criticise both C.P. and M.R.P., and to insist on its terms for entering a new post-election coalition, with a vehement lack of realism reminiscent of the British Liberal Party in the inter-war period. The rejection of M. Daniel Mayer's report to the Convention and the displacement of the old Executive were expected; it is known that 70 per cent of the delegates had instructions from local branches of the Party to cast this adverse vote. But though the Convention applauded M. Guy Mollet, leader of the Left wing, when he called for an effort by the Party to recapture its lost leadership of organised labour and for a re-affirmation of Socialist belief in the class struggle, it applauded equally M. André Philip's advocacy of a *rapprochement* between the policies of French Socialists and those of the British Labour Party. The new Executive of 31 members contains 16 supporters of M. Mollet; but M. Philip and M. Mayer have also been re-elected, and the terms of the general policy resolution clearly put a final end to the dormant but still existing Socialist-Communist Liaison Committee. M. Blum emerges, notwithstanding the resignation of "his" general secretary, M. Mayer, with his ascendancy over the Party little impaired.

Saxony Votes

By all accounts, the machinery of voting in the municipal elections in Russian-occupied Saxony was fair; the ballot was secret; and, with the reservation that Social-Democrats as such could not stand, the result of the poll seems to be a fair reflection of popular opinion. Of the votes cast, 48.4 per cent. went to the Socialist Unity Party (S.E.D.), 20.2 per cent. to the Liberal Democratic Party, 19.7 per cent. to the Christian Democratic Union, and the balance to small fractions. Since spoiled papers amounted to less than 10 per cent. of the poll, it seems probable that the majority of the "dissident" Social-Democrats voted for the Liberal Democratic Party, whose policy, even more than that of the C.D.U., is opposed to nationalisation measures. In short, the S.E.D. emerges as overwhelmingly the strongest single Party; but, despite the advantages it had in organisation and propaganda, it has failed as yet to secure in Saxony an absolute majority in favour of "the Russian system." It may be significant that the largest S.E.D. majorities were in rural districts, where land reform has undoubtedly appealed to the peasantry.

Moves in China

The scale of civil war in China increases daily. According to Chou En-lai, the Communist leader, 217 Kuomintang divisions, that is 86 per cent. of their total forces, are now taking part in operations. New efforts, however, have been made to reach a settlement. General Chiang Kai-shek has agreed to an American suggestion for a Five-man Committee, under Dr. Leighton Stuart, to arrange a coalition government of all parties. The Communists have agreed to be represented provided they are given an assurance that "cease-fire" will be ordered and the Kuomintang demands held in abeyance until the reorganisation of a new Government. They continue to attribute major responsibility for the civil war to America, without whose help the Nanking Government could not organise large-scale fighting, and bitterly criticise the recent sale to Nanking of 855 million dollars' worth of surplus American property.

The Status of the Poles

The Government has been singularly inept in its management of the publicity given to the transformation of General Anders' army into a Resettlement Corps. Through the publication by the Press of extracts of a War Office circular without adequate explanation, the impression was created that the intention is to incorporate these men in the British Army as a gigantic Foreign Legion. This, we hope and believe, is not so. The case for retaining the Poles in "formations" is that comparatively few of them speak English, that their absorption into industry (quite apart from British Trade Union objections) will be difficult to arrange until they have been given some training, and that they will have to be located in camps until the general housing shortage is made good. All this should have been explained. But another point which is more difficult to understand, and which has never been explained, is why the Resettlement Corps should be under the administration, not of the Ministry of Labour, but the War Office. What is the need for military discipline? And does the administrative "convenience" of military control outweigh the disadvantage that the men will continue to be exposed to the influence of officers obsessed with the idea of a Western war against Russia? Moreover, they may be deprived of their citizenship by their own Government on the ground that they are members of a foreign army.

The Americans Again Object

The United States State Department is still raising objections to the draft Soviet-Swedish Trade Agreement, under which Sweden is to extend a credit to the Soviet-Union, mainly for buying electrical and timber-working machinery. There are also clauses providing for improved trade between the two countries. The Americans, regarding such an agreement as an instance of "discrimination," are demanding the insertion of a clause making the whole agreement subject to modification to fit in with the preposterous Trade Proposals which they put forward last year, and forced the British Government to accept as a condition of getting the loan. The Swedes have very properly answered by asserting their entire freedom to make what commercial agreements they please, without submitting to American dictation. The State Department has also protested to the Soviet Union, representing the agreement as contrary to the conditions agreed upon when Lend-Lease was introduced. The whole situation is quite absurd. Evidently countries must be free to make mutual agreements which are calculated to help towards an expansion of international trade, and to rule out all such agreements as contain any provision for reciprocal exchanges is quite intolerable. The Americans are behaving as if the Trade Proposals which they put forward on their own were already part of the approved machinery of UNO, and were to be regarded as the final word in international commercial behaviour. Luckily, these Proposals have no binding force; and it is to be hoped that before the World Trade Conference meets next year there will have been many more bargains as good as the British deals with Canada and Denmark and the bigger arrangements now being made between Sweden and Russia.

World Food and Power Politics

The outcome of the Copenhagen Conference of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation depends on two factors. First, there is the question how far agricultural interests in the chief food-producing countries—and, in particular, the Farm Lobby in Washington—will be prepared to forgo the immediate advantages of a free scramble for profits in a sellers' market in favour of some degree of international control of production and prices. More fundamental, however, is the question whether the Big Powers have enough unity of purpose to afford any basis for international regulation of food supplies in accordance with the ascertained needs of peoples. Once food is regarded as a weapon of politics—and it is so regarded by powerful interests to-day in the United States—attempts to secure rational distribution by international agreement become nonsense. The root cause of Unrra's liquidation was that Britain and America declined to give further assistance to countries, however needy, within the Russian sphere of influence. If that attitude persists at Copenhagen, Sir John Orr's plan will be still-born.

Uneven Distribution of Man-power

The latest issue of the *Monthly Digest of Statistics* contains figures which point to a somewhat disquieting lack of balance in our redeployment of man-power. At 6.3 millions, the total numbers employed at the end of June in all manufacturing industries compare with a figure of 6.5 millions for June, 1939; and since those employed on orders for the Forces were 500,000 fewer last June than seven years ago, the numbers available for home market production were down by only 55,000, notwithstanding an increase of 365,000, as compared with 1939, in the numbers working for export. On the face of it, this looks satisfactory, but the total figures conceal a marked expansion in some industries at the expense of others. Thus, in metal manufacture, engineering, and the automobile, aircraft and shipbuilding industries, numbers employed have risen from 2.7 to 3.2 millions, while there has been an expansion of 50,000 in the numbers employed in chemical and ancillary trades. Against this, the numbers employed in the textile industries have fallen from 988,000 to 694,000; those in the clothing industries from 631,000 to 469,000; and the labour strength in brick-making, pottery, furniture, paper-making and printing is still much below the pre-war level. While this situation continues—and it can be corrected only by much more drastic demobilisation—domestic shortages will be the consequence. We cannot at the moment forgo the export advantages obtainable by the metal manufacturing and associated industries. At the same time, it is open to question whether we are wise in putting so many eggs in the "capital goods" basket—vulnerable as such industries are to a world slump. It would be helpful if the Government were to work out and publish a tentative man-power budget for, say, 1948.

REORIENTATIONS

II.—VITAL INTERESTS

EVER since Mr. Bevin's first statement as Foreign Secretary the issues of foreign policy have been presented to the public in the form of an either/or. Either, we are told, the Labour Government must stand up to Russia, or it must capitulate to her. By putting the problem in this way, Mr. Bevin, with the enthusiastic support of the Tory Opposition, has been able to play the rôle, in which he so much delights, of the patient, blunt and battered Englishman defending himself and his country against the below-the-belt attacks of alien assailants.

This sort of argument may be good enough for a Party Conference, for a Parliamentary debate, or even for Paris. It becomes a serious matter, however, when the British Cabinet adopts it as the basis for its thinking. In wartime, when victory becomes an overriding directive, foreign policy may sometimes be resolved into crude choices between black and white. But when peace is being made, these hard alternatives should be forgotten. To think in pugnacious terms of black and white is to create precisely the war atmosphere which it should be our aim to destroy.

By over-simplification and vulgarisation of complicated issues, Mr. Bevin has not only confounded his critics, but forfeited the opportunities for mediation which were his, when he succeeded Mr. Eden. Moreover, he is gradually being led to make his debating points the basis of British policy, until today the British delegation in Paris is solemnly behaving as though it really was faced with the blank choice of ganging up against Russia or capitulating to the Kremlin.

This dilemma, of course, is purely imaginary. Only if you are determined on a divorce, do you whip yourself into a white anger of self-righteousness, and tell your friends that you must either part from your wife or become her abject slave. By persuading himself and his colleagues that he is threatened by a Communist conspiracy, that his patience is exhausted and that the show-down will soon come, Mr. Bevin is making a break with Russia more likely. And when a show-down does come, as in Persia, he exposes to the whole world that his dramatics have been bluff, and that Britain cannot face complete rupture.

The first essential is to stop this policy of postures and to recognise that there are no heroic decisions to be made. The Battle of Britain is over and so should the speeches be which were appropriate to it. This country cannot, even if it wanted to, either lead a crusade against Communism or capitulate to Stalin. Either course would be suicidal. The sooner we forget this pair of half-baked alternatives, the better.

Consider for a change a few facts. In 1946 there are only two Powers able, unaided and from their own resources, to engage in a major war, whether with or without atomic bombs. In 1940-1941, for nearly a year, we fought alone. It was for the last time in our history. The myth of that epoch must not colour our calculations or induce us to accept commitments beyond our strength.

The warning has been given to us by France. If the Cabinet likes analogies, it should study French foreign policy between the wars, and observe what happened to a Power which indulged in grandiose power-politics and disregarded the diminution of her resources of man-power and of wealth. We stand today in a position not dissimilar from that of France in 1919, and American policy towards us is strangely like our insular attitude to France in those tragic years.

In certain important ways, however, our position today is even weaker than that of the French in the Versailles period. Financially and economically, we are far more vulnerable; strategically these islands are probably defenceless, and large parts of our Empire are in process of dissolution. No speech from the Paris rostrum can conceal these facts from the outside world, least of all from the Russians and from the Americans. They do not look back to the epic of the Battle of Britain, but forward to the vacuum in the world balance of power which will be caused by the eventual termination of British supremacy beyond Suez; and they are asking themselves how much farther west British influence will shrink and what will replace it. There is nothing more difficult for an imperial nation than to wind up its own empire when it has become an anachronism. In history the dissolution of empires has nearly always occurred by conquest, because someone is always found like the Athenian Demosthenes to persuade his fellow-citizens that rhetoric and bluff can be a substitute for the big battalions and that in the last resort powerful allies cannot afford to "let the Empire down." Under demagogic leadership waning empires have gone down fighting—or discovered that they have been sold out to an ally.

The lesson is clear. America, which relied for two generations on British imperial strength to defend the Monroe doctrine, cannot be expected to show any gratitude for services rendered. Gratitude is an individual, not a national virtue. America will show us precisely the same lack of understanding which we showed to France between the wars. She will alternate between belligerent demonstrations of strength, such as her recent row with Yugoslavia, and unpredictable moods of conciliation. In an emergency she will rely on us to fight and probably grossly overestimate the strength of our armed forces. But she will not undertake prior to war the commitments necessary to hold the Empire together, except in return for concessions intolerable to British pride. And throughout she will display an intense suspicion that Britain in her period of weakness is relying on her support for imperial interests which are not her concern.

To engage, therefore, on an all-out defence of what remains of our Empire against the Russians, on the supposition that in so doing we shall have American backing, is extremely foolhardy. To do so, while flouting all progressive American opinion in our dealings with Greece, Spain, and Palestine, is downright folly. In order to obtain steady and continuous American support, we must pay a price which no one in this country is ready to pay—the subordination on all main issues of British to American interests. This is the real answer to Mr. Churchill's Fulton speech.

What then should be done? First and foremost, our foreign policy must be completely re-thought and firmly based on a foundation, not of analogies and dilemmas, but of political first principles. These principles could be expressed in various ways. The following formulation might at least form a basis for discussion. (1) We must scale down our commitments until they are commensurate with our economic and military strength. On the basis of this re-assessment, we must re-define what our vital interests are. (2) We must seek, if possible, during the period of Russian-American conflict which lies ahead, to extricate those vital interests from the conflict. (3) We must associate with ourselves other Powers which seek, like us, in their own interests to avoid taking sides in the Russian-American struggle for power. (4) Together with our associates, we must play for time and use our influence at every opportunity to ease the tension between the two great Powers and their satellites and to strengthen UNO. On no account should we or our associates commit ourselves to either side, whatever the promises or inducements which are held out.

The Government's foreign policy violates each of these principles, but none more violently than the first. No figure has been given for the size of our armed forces in 1947. But there is every reason to fear that the Government will attempt to retain about one million men under arms, and to maintain an armament industry of proportionate dimensions. This will involve the indefinite prolongation of conscription for a two-year period and face the country with the choice of either continuing austerity or relaxing the export drive. Either alternative is suicidal.

The sane course would surely be to reconsider our whole imperial strategy and foreign policy in the light of our present capacities. For the independence of these islands it is essential to maintain the friendliest relations with all the countries of the Atlantic seaboard. This, however, is far less a military than a political problem. The urgent need is not for staff conversations, in preparation for a war which would anyway be fatal to Western Europe, but an attempt to achieve a common approach to economic and where possible, international-political problems, above all that of Germany. Everyone of these countries has a tradition of Social Democracy, and all their governments, with the exception of the Spanish and Portuguese dictators, would accept a lead on the part of the Labour Government, provided it was not designed to involve them in the Russian-American struggle or to use them for creating a British bloc.

By relying on American support in his crusade against Communism, Mr. Bevin has thrown away a golden opportunity. A year ago, for instance, he was hopeful of achieving an Anglo-French treaty. But it is now clear that his crypto-Churchillian attitude to America and his tacit support for Franco have prejudiced the chances of this treaty. The French very wisely are not prepared to join either bloc and are seeking to play the rôle of mediator which the Labour Government was pledged to assume. Working closely together M. Bidault and Mr. Bevin could have much more than twice the influence which they exert alone.

The second sphere, which we must indubitably accept as a vital interest, is Africa and the Western Mediterranean. We should be prepared to exert quite exceptional efforts to retain our influence in this area. Moreover, the other Powers chiefly interested in Africa—France, Belgium, Spain and Portugal—are linked with us both as Western European and as African Powers. Under joint Franco-British leadership and with a new regime in Spain, a common policy of African development might well be evolved which threatened neither America nor Russia and benefited all, including the Africans.

But no such initiative is even considered by a Cabinet obsessed by the Russian menace. The Colonial Office and the Foreign Office, relying on American assistance, are determined to hang on to all our scattered colonial possessions and bases until they are either taken from us or fall away owing to internal unrest. A meagre Colonial Development Fund is parcelled out in driblets to some sixty territories, and the growing unrest of the natives is met by the routine efforts of a totally inadequate colonial service. The result—to name one instance—may well be serious trouble in West Africa, an area vitally important to our economy.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet assumes ever greater commitments in the Middle East. To combat the Russians and make the continuance of British Imperialism possible, it supports reactionary forces susceptible to the Communist bogy and antagonises not only the Jews but the more far-sighted Arab nationalists, who do not want to be involved in a conflict between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. Hence the breakdown of the Egyptian negotiations.

These instances—chosen almost at random—show the piecemeal character of our present definition of vital interests. Determined to defend everything, we endanger everything. Dissipating our energies, we make ourselves far weaker than we should be if we concentrated on carefully selected and really vital interests. Seeking with American aid to remain one of the Big Three—in the military sense of the phrase—we jeopardise the European and African interests which are really vital to our existence and forfeit the moral leadership which a year ago was the most valuable asset of the Labour Government in international affairs. Such are the consequences of the Cabinet's refusal to base its policy on "abstract principles."

MINISTERS AND THEIR BOARDS

THE nationalisation debates in Parliament raised a problem on which the divisions of opinion—sometimes between Government and Opposition, and at other times between Ministers and their own back-benchers—were not just echoes of past election campaigns or trial shots for future ones, but genuine doubts which for the most part remain unquietened. That problem is, in broad definition, how to *administer* a nationalised industry; and in detail it poses sharply a number of questions about the structure of public corporations and their relationships with (*a*) the Minister, (*b*) Parliament, (*c*) their employees, and (*d*) the consumer.

In considering these questions, confusion is caused by attempts to draw comparisons between one corporation and another. Such comparisons, which take no account of fundamental and inherent differences in the functions and scope of public corporations for different industries, are unsoundly based. One has only to consider the three enterprises nationalised last year to see why this is so. The Bank of England sells nothing, the mines sell a commodity, and civil aviation sells a service; scarcely anybody buys from the Bank, some thousands of people buy air travel, and everybody buys coal; the Bank employs hundreds, the airlines thousands, and the mines hundreds of thousands. In the case of the Bank we have changed ownership with little actual (though potentially considerable) change of function; in coal we have absorbed enormous physical assets demanding fundamental changes in organisation; in civil aviation we buy scarcely any assets at all. But the most fundamental difference, as affecting the place of the corporations *vis-à-vis* the Government and Parliament, is that the Bank is a small part of Dalton's responsibilities, the mines a large part of Shinwell's, and the airlines almost the whole of Winster's.

This last point illustrates the difficulties which arise in considering the form and degree of accountability to Parliament for the activities of the corporations. There are voices on both sides of the House calling, with more vehemence than understanding, for the running of nationalised industries on a business basis without detailed and pettifogging interference from Government Departments. This sounds good, but just what does it mean? It is easy to beg the question by arguing that the Minister's function is policy-making and the Board's function is administration; but every experienced policy-maker or administrator knows that the line between these two functions is a hazy and shifting one, that the best policy can be frustrated by unsympathetic administration, and that indeed policy often evolves (whether the policy-maker likes it or not) out of a synthesis of administrative decisions. To take the extreme case of the airways corporations (which are extreme in the sense that they are responsible to a Minister with few other responsibilities), if the Ministry of Civil Aviation is to make policy for the executives of the corporations to carry out in detail, what are the functions of the corporations' Boards?

This question comes into sharp relief if one tries to define the sort of Parliamentary questions which it will be permissible to ask, and the sort of Parliamentary criticisms which it will be permissible to make, about the work of the airways corporations. Each corporation will have a sort of Whitley Council through which employees may make representations, not only about their own problems but also about the efficiency of the corporation's services, and there will be a sort of consumers' council (considerably emasculated by their Lordships' House) to which the passenger can complain about services and fares (though the council isn't obliged to do very much about it). If these channels provide, as is obviously intended, for the ventilation of all grievances and complaints, what remains as the sector for which the Minister is accountable to Parliament? In fact, in the case of a Ministry like Civil Aviation or Transport—the position is obviously different in the cases of Fuel and Power and of Supply (for iron and steel)—what will the poor Minister do with his time? And how will Parliament find out what he's doing about the operation of his services?

On paper, Parliament has almost unlimited power, provided by its hold on the purse-strings, over all public corporations making demands on public funds (though not, of course, over those making a net profit). But the case of the B.B.C. shows how difficult it is for Parliament to exercise that power in practice. The basis on which the B.B.C. fixes its monetary demands and haggles those demands with the Treasury (a procedure which looks suspiciously like allowing in advance for the fact that the Treasury will knock 5 per cent. off the original indent, no more and no less), the unsatisfactory nature of B.B.C. accounting (which, for example, gives a net profit figure for publications without any supporting accounts), and the severe constitutional limits within which Parliament and its Committees may query the expenditure of B.B.C. money, show that financial controls alone are insufficient to make public corporations responsive to the will of Parliament.

Nor is the position any clearer with regard to criticism in Parliament of individual members of the Boards or staffs of public corporations. A civil servant is rightly protected from Parliamentary criticism on the ground that his Minister must take responsibility for all the acts of his Department, and during the past year some of the more traditionalist M.P.s have sought, without realising the implications of the problem, to extend this personal freedom from Parliamentary criticism to members of public corporations. If this thesis is accepted, Parliament will find itself in the Morton's fork of not being able to criticise any of the acts of a corporation because its members are shielded behind a Minister who nevertheless disclaims jurisdiction over the day-to-day routine work of the corporation. Thus, the members of the Boards will be the only administrators who are not accountable for what they do either to a body of shareholders or to Parliament representing the nation as shareholders.

A further problem concerns the relationship between representation of consumer interests and representation of employee interests. The general view, which seems to be shared by the Government, is that these are two things to be kept in watertight compartments. Three corollaries which follow from this view are that the management-workers committee should confine itself to personnel and related problems, that the Advisory Council should consider only consumers' problems, and that the latter should not therefore include any workers' representation. Such an arrangement is unsound in principle because it inevitably leads to an atmosphere of conflict of interests instead of community of interests. Moreover, it is cumbersome in practice, since it will often result in two bilateral discussions instead of one trilateral one. Representations from consumers to the Advisory Council will often result in the Council making recommendations to the Board which, because they may adversely affect the interests of workers, will have to be argued before the management-workers committee.

To take an example, if general complaints by consumers against a corporation's personnel reach the management through a body on which consumers but not personnel are represented, and then these complaints are laid by the management (as they will have to be) before the management-workers committee, then the management is forced into the position of acting not as mediator between worker and customer but as prosecuting counsel on behalf of the customer. This is a situation which cannot fail to increase the doubts which the trade union movement already feels about the provisions so far made for workers' participation in the management of nationalised industries.

On the whole, there are grounds for believing that, in formulating the relationships between Parliament, public corporations, their consumers and their workers, the Government has not taken full account of the accepted tenets of scientific management. In some nationalised industries the problems of inter-relationships will not be easy to solve even by reference to a body of sound managerial principles; but the task will be still more difficult if we approach it empirically and on the basis of the personal predilections of individual ministers. The complexities of transport and of iron and steel make this problem both serious and urgent.

IAN MIKARDO

ACHIEVEMENT IN GREECE

THE thing is done. Out of an adult male Greek electorate of rather less than 2 millions, over 1,100,000 voted for the return of King George, and about 520,000 against. The question whether this is a valid expression of the people's will is disputable and irrelevant. How far violence and fraud distorted the poll, we do not pretend to know; nor do we know how many middle-class republicans voted for the King, either because they believed that continuance of Anglo-American aid depended on his return, or because they saw in the legal acceptance of monarchy the only alternative to a Right-wing *coup d'état* or a renewal of violence from the Left. The fact that villages dominated by "X-ites" voted solidly for the monarchy, whereas both the Piraeus and Salonika had majorities for a Republic, is beside the point. What matters is that King George regards this vote, however obtained, as justification for his immediate return. He goes back as crowned leader of a Populist Party which has used its power since the elections last spring to crush its opponents by imprisonments, deportations and executions, has suppressed the democratically constituted Greek trade union movement, and now proposes to crush the last remnants of freedom of speech in Greece by enacting the crime of *lèse-majesté*.

The Labour Government is universally regarded, outside this country, as the architect of this political achievement whose foundations Mr. Churchill laid. Taken in isolation, each successive step in Mr. Bevin's policy towards Greece may be capable of defence. It may have been excusable (however mistaken the reading of political forces) to pin hopes on the ramshackle Centre government which was formed as the result of Mr. McNeil's mission, and to exclude from it all "Left extremists." It may have been logical to override the protests of the Liberal Prime Minister and to insist on elections being held last March in order to "know what the real sentiments of the Greek people are," despite the fact that conditions of disorder were such that no true electoral verdict could be given. It may have been unavoidable, after what had happened, to preserve order by retaining in Greece a strong British garrison helped by a British-trained police against whose political character Mr. Sophoulis protested in vain. Finally, it may have been politic, when the Populists acquired power, to turn a blind eye to "X-ite" terror, the recruitment of an all-Royalist civil service and the campaign against organised labour. There was always the specious plea that we were not entitled to interfere with the actions of a sovereign Greek government protected, though it might be, by British bayonets.

What matters is the cumulative effect of policy. The relevant point to-day is that a Labour Government, elected a year ago to carry out a Socialist policy abroad as well as at home, has ultimately connived at the restoration in Greece of a reactionary king by a government tainted with collaborationists and as repressive in its attitude to the working-class in Greece as it is chauvinistic in its behaviour towards neighbouring countries. Had this result of Labour

Foreign policy been prophesied at Labour meetings on the eve of the general election, the prophet would have been laughed to scorn. Yet it has happened.

From this intolerable responsibility the Cabinet will now have painfully to extricate itself—at least by withdrawing immediately the British garrison from Greece. But the moral which the Labour Party will do well to ponder is that (as Mr. Churchill could have told it) you cannot abort a revolution by negatively opposing to it the weak and half-hearted forces of the Centre. The alternative to a Leftist E.A.M. Government (which the Communist Party might indeed ultimately have dominated) was always a Fascist counter-revolution, whether it was carried out by violent or superficially legal means. Mr. Churchill was prepared to pay that price for keeping Greece as a strong-point in a British imperialist system. Mr. Bevin has carried on the Churchillian policy and pretended that it was in accord with Socialist principles. No one outside Britain has been deceived.

A LONDON DIARY

Tom Driberg, who is now writing his *Reynolds* column from America, seems to think that he has "revealed" the fact that Mr. Bevin gave a pledge to the Anglo-American Palestine Committee when he met them privately in London. As a matter of fact, Mr. Bartley Crum, the American Committee-man from whom Driberg heard the story in Los Angeles, has been making revelations about what went on in the Committee ever since May. They were discussed in this paper as early as May 11th. Since he has now given his detailed story of the incident, I asked Dick Crossman, who was also present, to give me his version. He tells me that the Anglo-American Committee while in London last January was given a formal Foreign Office luncheon at the Dorchester. Mr. Bevin received the guests and he was accompanied by George Hall, Creech Jones, Philip Noel-Baker and Oliver Stanley, as well as a number of senior permanent Civil Servants, *not* as Crum states, by "most of the Cabinet." After lunch, Mr. Bevin made an impromptu speech of welcome. He began by thanking the Committee for removing from his shoulders a thankless responsibility—at least for a hundred and twenty days. Then came a characteristic "think" passage, on the out-datedness of racial States, which most Committee members interpreted as a broad hint that the Foreign Secretary was opposed to an Arab or a Jewish solution, and consequently favoured the maintenance of the mandatory system. He then went on to say, very deliberately and very emphatically, that if, as he hoped, the Committee produced a unanimous report, he would see to it that it was implemented as soon as possible.

* * *

Crossman's version of the speech—of which naturally no record was kept—differs from Crum's in two important points. Whereas Crum makes Mr. Bevin say, "We regard it as so important that your report should be unanimous, that, if it is unanimous, we shall forthwith implement it. I give you my assurance of that," Crossman is certain that Mr. Bevin spoke as he so often does in the first person singular, and he cannot remember any reference to the importance of unanimity. This makes a good deal of difference. If he is right, the Foreign Secretary was not giving a solemn pledge on behalf of the Government, but expressing informally his determination to see that a unanimous report was carried out. But Crossman agrees with Crum that the speech made an immense impression on the Committee, especially on the six American members. They had been very suspicious in Washington that the Committee was merely a time-wasting device of Mr. Bevin's. His emphatic personal assurance convinced them that the British Government was really open minded and ready to carry out recommendations which went against the violently pro-Arab views of its permanent Civil Servants. As a result, when it came to drafting the Report, the American members were far more ready to make concessions to the British point of view, since they thought they knew that, though their recommendations were Anglo-American, they would become British policy and be carried out by British forces. Then on the very day after the publication of the report Mr. Attlee demanded the disarmament of the Haganah before any futher immigration, despite the fact that the Committee after long discussion had turned this recommendation down. Naturally enough, this infuriated the six Americans, and convinced them that they had once again been outsmarted by an Englishman. The moral of the story seems to be that it is unwise to appoint an impartial Anglo-American committee, and still more unwise to promise to carry out its report, if you are anyway going to accept the views of your permanent officials.

* * *

Foreign authors like Pinero and Somerset Maugham are by no means the chief victims of the latest effort to purge the Soviet stage of "bourgeois reactionary ideology and morality." The decree hits just as hard at Soviet writers who have idealised Tsars and Khans in their historical plays. Some weeks ago, before the present storm blew up, Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible* was sharply attacked for presenting the tyrant in too favourable a light. This is in line with the post-war Kremlin policy which, having played up traditional martial glories of Russia in order to sustain and unite the country in the struggle against Hitler, now seeks to attribute victory to the Marxist leadership of the Communist Party. We have become familiar with these ideological drives and switches. Zoschenko, whose stories (many of them republished in this journal) have been the best proof possible that humour and self-criticism survive in the U.S.S.R., has been rapped on the knuckles more than once. Shostakovitch, too, suffered a temporary eclipse. During the war a good deal of latitude seems to have been given both in literature and the theatre; bourgeois authors previously in disfavour had their books translated or their plays performed. Not all of them are turned down by the new decree. There are, I suspect, two reasons for this new turn of the cultural screw. The first is that all departments of Soviet life are receiving a careful overhaul with the object of consolidating both the State and party machines after their battering during the war. *Pravda*, these days, is full of polemics against inefficient administrators, irresponsible party functionaries and other social errants. The second reason is that millions of Soviet troops have returned home, with new impressions of the world beyond Russia's Western frontiers. They are naturally a source of ferment, some of it healthy, and the men in the Kremlin fear the corrupting influence of the West. They know that every time in the past when a window has been opened to the West, the wind has blown far through their country.

* * *

Rail transport is so short in the British Zones of Germany and Austria that no room can be found on the trains for the few hundred survivors of the concentration camps who wish to join their relatives in England under the Home Secretary's scheme. At least this is the official reason given for turning requests down. I was therefore interested to read in a *Times* despatch last Monday describing the arrival of the first wives and children of men serving in Germany the following quotation from a fourteen-page booklet which was distributed. "In all trains, cigarettes, sweets and magazines will be provided. The size of the trains has been so calculated that everyone should have a corner seat. There is wine to be bought during meals." This was printed under the headline, "BAOR Families in Germany. A British Example." These empty middle seats—deliberately kept empty slightly to increase the luxury of travel—are a British example of exactly what? Arrogance? No. Just lack of political imagination. We often turn up our noses at the methods used by the French in running their Zone. They strip it of food and of the product of its factories, but at least they don't go in for this sort of thing. A friend of mine who returned from Mainz the other day says that instead of evicting the Germans from their houses and making them leave their furniture behind as the British do, the French make their officers and families share houses with the German occupier. Social contact—perhaps too much of it—is thereby encouraged. I have realised that few British families could stand this French method. But could not the authorities responsible avoid this indecent habit of running into extremes? Just as the choice is not between keeping German prisoners here indefinitely and sending them back just when we need them for the harvest, so the choice is not between refusing to send families to Germany and sending them like Sahibs to Poona? Is it really necessary just before the cold weather sets in to evict thousands of German families from the single rooms in which they live to provide three-bedroom flats for officers' wives? I am sure that many of those wives if they are permitted to realise what suffering their comfort has caused will be the first to protest.

* * *

Most people have heard the stories about building labour and materials being diverted to luxury repairs and decoration at the expense of essential work. In the last week, among other cases, I have heard of a large house where new fireplaces were fitted throughout to match a new scheme of interior decoration. Apart from the jobbing builder who takes the risk of doing such work without a licence, there are contractors who are willing to use war-damage licences as a cover for additional and unnecessary work while they are on the premises. There have been a number of prosecutions, but the fines are small compared to the profits that can be made out of this sort of job. A practical suggestion for curtailing this black market comes from a friend in the building trade. He points out that licences issued by local authorities for the erection of scaffolding must, by law, be displayed on the job. He asks why the same practice should not be extended to repair work. If a notice was displayed outside a house stating exactly what work the builder was permitted to do, it would be much easier for interested parties to keep a check on what was actually being done.

* * *

Unanimity reigns in our pub about the weather and the beer shortage, but about the harvest there is a variety of opinions. One old farm labourer declares that it is not the worst season he can remember: he can recall a year in which they gathered in the corn from the fields on Christmas Eve. Then they say that the crop was originally very good and that, difficult though it is to gather, it will not not be too bad. All sorts of ingenious efforts are being made by hand and machinery to pick up and bind broken and flattened crops. I walked through one field near my cottage and saw just how difficult the problem is. Tall weeds have grown up amongst the stalks as they lie near the ground, and the hail and wind have thrashed half the grain into the muddy earth. Somehow the wheat and barley have to be disentangled, and, as for the grain that lies on the ground, I gather from a neighbouring farmer that nothing better can be done than to turn the chickens, or what remains of them after slaughter, into the field. But it is very difficult to get an accurate picture. Another friend, who had been working on a large estate in Suffolk, tells me that the crop is excellent in spite of everything. And I am sceptical about all the estimates, even those given on the wireless.

* * *

Coming Cabinet changes are, I think, likely to be much less extensive than rumour suggests. We are likely to see Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Alexander in other Cabinet posts; a change is also likely in the Colonial Office, but I anticipate no general shuffle.

CRITIC

THE FRENCH SOCIALISTS

I DIDN'T know how much unconscious nostalgia for Paris I had been accumulating since 1939 until I found myself once more in that exhilaratingly alive, intensely human city. My official reason for going to Paris was to lecture on "Britain and Europe" at the *Centre d'Etudes de Politique Etrangère*—the French equivalent of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, but less grand and more lively. This I combined with trying to get a first-hand impression of the French political scene, particularly on the Left.

What emerged with startling clearness from these investigations was the serious condition of the French Socialist Party. Its membership is about 400,000, as compared with 900,000 in the Communist Party. In both parties this is a purely individual membership, since their constitutions do not provide for affiliation by Trades Unions or other organisations. But whereas the Communist Party is mostly working-class and has a sort of *de facto* political affiliation with the C.G.T. which it largely controls, the Socialist Party, according to the statements made to me by leading Socialists, and confirmed from well-informed non-party sources, has lost about two-thirds of its working-class support.

About 30-35 per cent of the Socialist Party's membership is still working-class, mostly in the North. But the remaining 65-70 per cent is middle class—mostly lower and petty officials. The French Socialist Party has become a Centre party. It has taken the place of the old Radical Socialists. Like them, it is concerning itself more and more with ethics and ideals to the exclusion of practical issues, and seems to be courting the same fate.

The Party has a vague programme, no leaders and only one outstanding man. Worst of all, it has no ambition or real desire for power. The programme suffers because it is difficult to distinguish from that of the Communists—who, even when they do not go so far as the Socialists on paper, look to the French workers far more likely to put their policies into practice.

Léon Blum is the only big man the French Socialist Party has got. He towers above his contemporaries in intellect, breadth of culture and moral prestige. The regard for him approaches veneration. His personal position is that of Ramsay MacDonald in 1929, Keir Hardie and the Tolpuddle Martyrs, all rolled into one.

Unfortunately, he is not a political leader. He lives in the past. He is still defending the Party's fatal pusillanimity with regard to the Spanish Republic. He can write brilliant articles demonstrating why the French Socialist Party should have nothing to do with either the Communist Party or the M.R.P. But he is a little weak on constructive suggestions as to where they go from there. He drew the conclusion from the heavy defeat suffered by the Socialist Party in the referendum, that they had been too ready to assume responsibility, and insisted upon their accepting as little power and as few posts as possible in the present coalition.

The result of this kind of leadership is that the Socialist Party will have to present itself at the next election as a party soliciting votes, not because it wants the power to govern the country, but on the contrary, in order to perpetuate tripartism as the price of its own survival. It is paradoxical and ironic but true, that the French Socialists will not govern with the M.R.P. and without the Communist Party because the M.R.P. are not good enough Socialists. Nor will it work with the Communist Party without the M.R.P. because the Communists are not good enough democrats. Therefore it insists on the continuation of the three-party coalition, which most people agree is the course most likely to sabotage Socialism and ultimately bring down democracy through a Gaullist *Putsch* or even a legally established dictatorship. The Socialists feel bound to insist on tripartism out of loyalty to democracy; tripartism is bound to cause a crisis in French democracy; a crisis is the great hope of the Gaullists, ex-Vichyssois, Croix de Feu, and other adherents of reaction, Fascism and big business, still so powerful in France and longing for a chance to smash French democracy.

One of the queerest things in the extraordinary age through which we are living, is the obstinate blindness and deafness of Social-Democratic Parties in one country to the experience of their comrades in other countries. Ever since 1917, when the Mensheviks in Russia began it, the process has been going on in one country after another. The details vary, but the main lines of the pattern repeat themselves with monotonous regularity.

Your "moderate" Socialist, overtaken by critical times, hasn't got what it takes to make up his mind to join hands with the "extremists" on his Left, who really want power and without whom it is impossible to get the power necessary to defeat reaction and carry out Socialist reconstruction. Subjectively he justifies his refusal to take a decision on the ground of solicitude for the values of democracy and Western civilisation. But the practical consequence of his failure to decide is that he unwittingly and willy nilly drifts into the position of passive accomplice of the forces of reaction and counter-revolution that are gathering on the Right.

This process is working itself out again in France, in forms peculiar to that country, but conforming unmistakeably to the old, familiar pattern. It is accompanied by the same irresponsible and unreal psychological attitudes, ranging from a defensive and plaintive self-righteousness, through an insistence on principles and abstractions—without much concern about how to apply them—to a gay *insouciance*. "There can be no unity between us and the Communists," a Socialist leader told me cheerily, "because we fear they want to absorb us, and they suspect that we want to work with the M.R.P., and we're probably both right." No doubt. But whatever their private preferences, the French Socialist leaders know that to join up with the M.R.P. would mean the break-up of their Party.

As a result of their failure to make up their minds they have come to prefer slow suicide to a spectacular death in the arms of the M.R.P., or to a United Front with the Communist Party. As one Communist leader put it, "When we said to the Socialists 'Unite in one party' they replied 'Unity of action'; and now when we say 'Unity of action' they don't answer at all (*Ils ne disent plus rien !*)"

The Left wing of the French Socialist Party are aware how desperately dangerous the Party's situation has become. They are agreed that they must revive Marxism in the Party and renew its contact with the workers. But there is wide disagreement as to how this should be done. Some want unity of action with the Communists on the best terms still open to them. Others say it is too late—the French Socialist Party missed its chance in July of last year, when it was still the bigger of the two parties, and could have driven a favourable bargain. Things have gone so far now, they say, that the Communist Party is mainly interested in the dissolution of the Socialist Party and in picking up its members. Still others take an attitude to the Communists similar to that in this country of Michael Foot, the *Tribune* and the I.L.P. All sections of the "rebels" agree with the official leadership in believing that the Socialist Party may lose heavily again at the next election, but they are pessimistic and uncomfortably aware of their own lack of a feasible alternative policy.

K. ZILLIACUS

PRINTING TRADES' DISPUTE

Deliveries of this journal are subject to delays, up to 24 hours, during the present trade dispute.

S'DOTH YAM

Jerusalem (*By Air Mail*)

THE villages of Palestine have been ransacked, burned or merely searched by the armies of invading, occupying and Mandatory powers for thousands of years past, so there was nothing unusual in this week's search by the British 2nd Infantry Brigade of a Jewish fishing village. Nothing very unusual, that is, unless you are impressed by the fact that it was the first time in Palestine that dogs trained to scent buried metal objects were used by the searchers.

We were summoned at 3 a.m. to the Public Information Office in Jerusalem, climbed into three-tonners and were driven through the dawning light to S'doth Yam, which is alongside Caesaria on the shores of the Mediterranean. Remnants of Herod's marbled halls still lie outside the barbed wire stockade of the Jewish settlement which was launched about nine years ago during the Arab troubles. When we arrived at 7 a.m. we found the stockade surrounded on land by armed soldiers; while on the beach were a score or so Bren carriers, at sea two police launches were patrolling, and overhead a scout 'plane was keeping vigil. The operation had been brilliantly planned and was carefully co-ordinated by mobile wireless patrols. In all, an infantry brigade group of about 3,000 had taken part in this move against a village of under 200 inhabitants. The Brigadier in charge was confident that the villagers had been taken completely by surprise. Certainly they offered neither active nor passive resistance.

Cause of the search was the Army's suspicion that somewhere in S'doth Yam might be found some of the men or the materials used in the recent sabotage attack in Haifa Harbour. The settlement, they say, is "known to be a centre of illegal forces who assist in the landing of illegal immigrants," and it is also openly the place where Jewish sea scouts have a summer training camp.

Almost all the adults had been ordered out of the stockade before we arrived, and were being interrogated by members of the Palestine Police. The Army had brought a marquee along for the women to wait in after their interrogation. Children and pregnant women had been left inside the stockade in the care of the community's own nurses.

While the interrogation went on the Army began its methodical search of the settlement. Officers and N.C.O.s walked through every building, leaving chalked instructions for the soldiers who followed, such as "Try floor," "Beds to be moved" and "Use detector." Then came the soldiers with mine detectors, picks, pneumatic shovels and measuring sticks. Most of the huts had been built with double walls for coolness. Chip, chip, chip went the picks into the walls to see what might be hidden between. Lawns had been planted on corrugated iron sheets to prevent the hand-carted soil washing away into the sand. B-r-r-r, b-r-r-r, b-r-r-r, went the pneumatic shovels into the only green grass for miles around, because a mine detector reacts to buried iron sheets in much the same way as it does to a case of buried rifles.

The camera men were left despondent until the dogs appeared in all their splendour—trained, in France and Germany, to sniff a rifle buried ten feet below. They were Bob and Dumbo, Prince and Gyp and Rex; each with his own Army number and his own personal attendant. The camera men and the correspondents were overjoyed, so overjoyed that at last the officer in charge had to plead with us to leave the dogs alone, for they were neglecting their work.

We returned to the huts. Simple rooms, three or four to each long, narrow hut, they were furnished with cupboards made from packing cases but fashioned and painted in the sophisticated styles of pre-war Central European modernity. On their bedroom walls these fisherfolk had hung Van Gogh prints. In their bookcases were the plays of Shakespeare (in English) side by side with elementary manuals on sailing and Hebrew grammars.

In practically every room was a copy (in Hebrew) of collected verses and essays by Channa Senesh, a girl who lived in S'doth Yam before she enlisted with the Allies during the war and parachuted into Yugoslavia, eventually (it was reported) to be tortured to death in Hungary.

Life at S'doth Yam presents extraordinary contrasts—the copy of *Vogue* which the seamstress had open on her sewing machine; the arduously cultivated garden patch which is kept so that every drab room and every tent can have a little vase of flowers. The village is an uncanny, disturbing imposition of twentieth-century European urban civilisation on a lonely, sandy patch of the Mediterranean shore. It has electric light but all the crudity of a pioneer camp; it has chintz curtains on the windows but lacks the simple correctness of the most primitive village.

It was an unpleasant job the soldiers had to do, but they did it pleasantly enough. Arms and sabotage equipment have been found elsewhere in Palestine in schools and synagogues and nurseries. They may well be hidden in fishing villages, too, and if so they must be found. Yet I thought also of those people who have been building their village against seemingly overwhelming natural odds. At the dawn of one day they are herded from their settlement for interrogation; at night they return to find lawns dug up in search of mines, tiled floors chipped in search of arms, and walls cut open in search of hiding places. If innocent, they will be infuriated; if guilty, they will be hardened. They are scarcely likely to be consoled by the thought that at least their huts have not been blown up as were so many Arab huts in earlier troubled years.

IAN BEVAN

THE AGRICULTURAL WAGE AND THE GARDEN

THE recent increase in the agricultural minimum wage to £4 a week, which the National Union of Agricultural Workers are determined shall be £4 10*s*. as soon as possible, will in course of time have a greater effect on the gardens of this country than any purely horticultural discovery. Though the increase does not apply to private gardeners, it applies to all market gardens, nursery gardens, and private gardens run commercially. And whereas the increase in cost of agricultural produce is masked by consumers' subsidy, costs in horticulture are unprotected. Hence the steady stream of questions in Parliament, as the nurseryman endeavours to cover his wage bill.

The man who hoed between the pre-war rose bush, retailing at from 1*s*. to 1*s*. 6*d*., earned 35*s*. to 40*s*. a week, the skilled knife-hand who budded them from 75*s*. to £4. The modern 4*s*. bush rose is being hoed at £4 and the new crop of briars, to sell in the autumn of 1947, was budded at anything up to £10 a week. In many cases, owing to labour shortage, the employer (the majority of nurserymen, even the most famous are capable of performing every skilled operation of their trade) has done the job himself, with a boy of 16 at 43*s*. to tie in the buds after him. Not only is labour more than twice its former rate, but every other item, from catalogues (four times pre-war) to briars, bast and labels has gone sky high or "under the counter."

Were bush roses a necessity of life (rationed in R.O. units with S.R. coupons for standard roses, on page 59) the cost of 4*s*. each would be paid to the grower, and the price to the public would be 3*s*., the taxpayer bridging the gap. The more usual procedure for horticultural products is to fix a controlled maximum price, based on average cost of production at the time. All the controlled prices for 1946 were fixed before the increase in the agricultural rate, but only farm produce has been adjusted to correspond. These prices place no premium on skill, leave no margin for a bad season, and make the grower suit his pocket, not the public need. The practice of growing a quick crop of early lettuce before planting greenhouse tomatoes, means scarcity early in the season for the housewife, but turns out more food from the same area under glass, saves fuel and gives a greater cash return.

A controlled price for bush roses would be, say, 2*s*. 6*d*. each if the figure was fixed with the same severity as that for gooseberries (non-dessert) which were 46*s*. 8*d*. a cwt. until May 19th and sank to 32*s*. 8*d*. after July 1st. The result would be a complete disappearance of rose bushes, after those already planted had been cleared.

The rise in price of everything that grows in a garden, from Antirrhinums to Zauchnerias, will slowly reflect the farmworkers' additional 10*s*., and the further instalment will take prices even higher, but the increase in the cost of gardening to the individual will not be great. Amateurs may, instead of buying skill in fractions, tend to propagate their plants themselves and use their own skill instead. The pre-war allotment holder, apart from the healthy exercise and pleasure he gained, earned from 4*d*. to 6*d*. an hour raising vegetables. To-day digging for victory over food shortage is far more paying. The custom of bedding out, even with annuals grown in boxes, may decline still further, for the defeat of scarlet Geraniums, yellow Calceolarias, and blue Lobelia is only partly due to altered asthetic taste. Their curve of popularity was at its height when income tax was 9*d*. in the pound, and its fall has followed increasing taxation. Like Mrs. Beeton's cooking, lavish carpet bedding is a memory of more carefree days, for a small part of the population.

The main effect of the increase is, however, on direct wage costs and availability of garden labour. When the present generation of elderly gardeners dies out, and as soon as the rural housing situation improves even slightly, the large private garden, apart from those of hotels, clubs, nursing homes, etc., will become extinct.

The country house with a garden that required a staff of six men and a boy, will cost £1,500 a year for wages alone, to be paid out of taxed income. During the war, the really fortunate owner has kept one man slaving from daylight to dark growing vegetables, and endeavouring to keep the place tidy; the less fortunate have endured a succession of jobbing gardeners at from 2*s*. to 2*s*. 6*d*. an hour, to relieve the drudgery of weeding and lawn mowing.

Now the "situation vacant" column is full of advertisements for single-handed gardeners and chauffeur-gardeners, with wives willing to help in the house, and the "situations wanted" are from Head Gardeners, with life experience, expecting to end their days in light and highly skilled work and administrative duties, controlling a staff of from three to thirty men, at a good wage. Modern private gardening provides no ladder of promotion, or even security of employment for the 50 to 90 age group, when their muscles tire after the long battle to keep pace with grounds designed for more spendthrift days. Though his wife's skill as a cook, and "willingness to oblige" may keep the old man in his job, his craftsman's pride in the land he has grown to love will sicken him of the hopeless task, as year by year the garden "goes down."

"Modern gardeners are not like that, you never get the real hard working type, and the more you pay them the less they know and the lazier they are," objects the owner who vaguely feels that with the passing of the American loan surely some pre-war non-utility gardeners should be released soon. During the war, the private employer has had to compete for the labour remaining out of the Services, with every other avenue of employment. Now that the young and vigorous men, even the middle-aged and highly experienced 40 to 42s, are returning from the Forces, commercial nursery gardening is attracting them, with high wages, better conditions of labour, a 48-hour week, good opportunities of promotion for intelligence and skill.

The need for the gardener's wife to help in the house is as sore a point as the tied cottage in agriculture. "If there's trouble over the vegetables, you get it all thrown at you when you come home at night. If there's a dinner party, the missus is up there all hours. If the dog wants washing, the cesspool won't work, or the gutter gets choked, down they come after you, Sundays and all. I'm a gardener, and my wife shall be no woman's servant." The cottage at the end of the weedy drive is the employers' only bargaining weapon; once small houses at reasonable rents are available, the gardener will be away to independence.

One solution is to "run the garden commercially," making an inefficient nursery garden, whose chance of earning a profit depends on whether it is possible to use small horticultural machinery, and how great a dividend can be drawn on capital invested in peach houses, vineries and fruit trees. The main object of these expedients is to transfer the expense of the garden to the Inland Revenue, and as "The Towers Horticultural Products Co., Ltd." type of enterprise becomes more common, it will run the gauntlet of each successive Budget.

The other alternative is to sell or rent one's ten-acre white elephant, with living accommodation if possible, to one of the many thousand hopeful enthusiasts now in search of a small holding. It will mean that the puttering of motor hoes will be heard in every room in the house until darkness, particularly in summer, and pigs and poultry may invade the lawn, but in the future it will increase the value of the property, when prospective tenants realise that spacious grounds mean more than the most extortionate rent in cost of maintenance, even allowing full market value for fruit from the "matured orchard" and vegetables from the "fertile kitchen garden."

A product of changing conditions may be a new and superior race of jobbing gardeners. The Co-operative Garden Service, with electric hedge clippers, motor mowers, power sprayers, and small garden tractors, able and willing to reduce any garden to order with speed and efficiency, and maintain it by contract, is an idea that may well spread. As an opening for a team of ex-officers, with a battered car and trailer and plenty of enthusiasm, the career of super jobbing gardener offers an outdoor life, and a far better chance of a good income from a limited capital than any small holding.

The change over from private to nursery gardening will result in a greatly increased supply of horticultural products. Instead of sweeping leaves and mowing lawns, the keen gardener will be using his skill to its maximum efficiency; but, because of the labour cost, it is likely that only a small fall in prices will result. Every new house will have a garden, and for at least another four years these houses will be small ones for people of comparatively small incomes, many of whom have never had a garden before. All these gardens will need plants in quantity, none will be large enough to require more than a man's leisure hours for their cultivation, and the owners will buy, in microscopic quantities with every order, the skill of the nurseryman.

The pre-war rise in interest in horticulture was largely caused by the decline of the dour Scottish head gardeners who "allowed" her Ladyship to snip off a few dead blooms but *not* to interfere with "*My Carnations*." The wartime shortage of labour and the patriotic necessity of vegetable growing have still further increased this interest. To what length will that interest rise when hundreds of thousands of us have the pleasure of digging our own gardens at last?

Every ten shillings on the agricultural minimum wage, bringing up the nursery employee's pay and reducing the number of private gardeners, means that more people are forced into the discovery of the greatest truth about gardening. It is far more enjoyable to do the job yourself, making your own mistakes, and winning your own victories, than to pay anyone else to do it for you.

LAWRENCE D. HILLS

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Mrs. N. J. Lemon.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Asked why he signed a confession of the offences at the Police Station, Clark replied, "I thought you always had to sign if a police officer told you to."—*Essex County Standard.*

"This man had none of the attributes of civilisation. He had neither ration card nor identity card," said the St. Pancras coroner.—*Evening News.*

For the purpose of the Part of this Schedule a person over pensionable age, not being an insured person, shall be treated as an employed person if he would be an insured person were he under pensionable age and would be an employed person were he an insured person.—*National Insurance Act*, First Schedule, Part II.

Half of one of Himmler's garters is now in the possession of the 155th North London (Alexandra Park) Scout troop.—*Star.*

. . . the whole English cricket-loving public, which, so far as Test matches at any rate are concerned, includes almost every man and literate male child, and the more responsibly minded women as well.—*Evening Standard.*

GARRISON FESTIVAL

THE couple next to me in the Vienna-Salzburg bus were got up in the elaborate Peasant fashion which used to be worn by pre-war summer guests—*dirndl* in pastel shades, well-cut grey suit piped red and green, and Tyrolese hats garnished with a galaxy of badges and trinkets including a minute compass, thermometer and pocket knife, apparently in working order. At the zonal demarkation line, however, they revealed themselves as citizens of the U.S.

In Salzburg the confusion continues. Up in the sunlit air, among the spires, cupolas, and belfries, the atmosphere is Austrian, Latin and baroque. Down in the streets, clouds of dust are churned up constantly by a cavalcade of jeeps and staff cars, and the inner music of the town is drowned by the clangour of horns. This is an American garrison. The festival is incidental. And although army and civilian authorities have provided very well indeed for all visitors, none but members of the Forces and a few fortunate correspondents have wangled in. Apart from Americans, we have in our hotel a large number of French officers, a few British, a sprinkling of Yugoslavs, and one Soviet citizen of Austrian origin. Over a somewhat incongruous breakfast of griddle cakes and maple syrup, served under the old prints of the *Gablerbräu* dining room, we like to think of ourselves as the vanguard of future Salzburg audiences.

The international character of the festival has been preserved. But on the whole, their haphazard composition puts the occupation troops at a disadvantage. Poor GI's and Tommies despatched to yet another recreation centre, are visibly bewildered. The British soldier gapes politely. Enlisted men try to overcome their perplexity by taking snapshots everywhere, including the concert of chamber music. A Pinocchio landscape! The shows, they suppose, are O.K., but they don't quite understand why the Roxy cinema had to be re-converted into that "Festspielhaus." Meanwhile, the Salzburgers, strengthened by a handful of critics down from Vienna, sit back to judge this year's festival with all the fastidiousness of their centuries-old musical and theatrical tradition. One would, perhaps, not always care to know their political views, but they certainly are an audience of connoisseurs. Few, if any, of the productions put on with tremendous effort, pass without severe criticism. Even what may have been good enough, at one time, for the Metropolitan, does not necessarily make the grade here. It might have been wiser, therefore, to introduce to them a really first-rate American singer like Marian Anderson instead of Grace Moore to whom it fell, the other day, to represent the music of the West.

Ten years have passed since Reinhardt supervised the festival for the last time. The "magician" has died in exile. But his note-books remain, and his disciples have gathered to renew his tradition. From America, Helene Thimig, his widow, has come to re-enact superbly her old part as Faith in *Jedermann*. Ernst Lothar, a former director of Reinhardt's Vienna theatre and now a U.S. citizen, was wisely chosen by his Government to represent the occupying Power. And even if Heinz Hilpert had not been called in from Munich to recreate Hofmannsthal's version of the old *Everyman* morality play many Salzburgers would have remembered Reinhardt's stage directions; for there are few who have not taken part, at one time or another, in the children's roundalay at *Jedermann's* banquet.

This production is twenty-six years old, and the last ten have done much to invalidate the play's message. Some of its magic had gone out of it with Moissi. Now it is in danger of being petrified, of changing from a splendid revival of the allegorical theatre into the set, if perfect pattern of the Oberammergau passion play. Nor is the commedia dell'arte, Goldoni's *Servant of Two Masters* more than another attempt to recapture the spirit in which this festival was originally conceived. Hermann Thimig's Truffaldino has kept, these twenty years, all his grace and amiability. But again, this is now little more than technique, the wheels of the mechanism creak audibly, this play, one feels, has had its time.

But the emphasis, this year, is on opera. There is a new production of *Rosenkavalier*, although one discovers few new names among the cast. Where Lotte Lehmann and Mayr left off, Hilde Konetzni and Fritz Krenn have long ago taken over. A new Sophie, clear-voiced and graceful, has been found in Rosl Schwaiger. But under its present conductor, Swarowsky, this opera seems to suffer from a peculiarly teutonic heaviness, the capricious music is overloaded with Wagnerian weight, and the comedy turned into a dramatic farce. Much charm and beauty are left, and in any other but this over-critical atmosphere this careful production would probably win high marks.

When twelve years ago *Don Giovanni* was first performed in Salzburg by an almost entirely Italian cast, it did away with the old *Don Juan* tradition. Even the best performances heard until then were overshadowed by this original version in which the Italian language, richest in vowels, revealed itself as the most perfect vehicle for Mozart's music. This year, however, there is little fault to be found with *Don Giovanni*. Very ably conducted by Krips, it lacks nothing but brilliance. But brilliance is being achieved this year in Salzburg. The new production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* is without doubt the event of the season. This work, perhaps the most delightful opera ever written, is sung not by an assembly of stars, each delivering their series of arias with fatuous perfection, but by a well-trained ensemble. The producer, Oskar Fritz Schuh, has conceived the performance as a whole yet insisted on the best Mozart singers available in Austria. Irmgard Seefried is the Susanna we may have dreamed of, a Susanna who sings, acts, looks purest Mozart, yet subordinates her personality with as much modesty as she has spirit.

Each city has its hour. Salzburg's time is at night. Coming away from the *Festspielhaus*, we find most noises hushed. The bells and fountains can be heard again. The eye wanders over nocturnal facades, past chandeliers behind lighted windows. All contours are softened, all harshness is gone. An Italian sky is reflected in the river. Only the baroque saints have gone from the parapet of the rebuilt bridge, and the very few ravages wrought by war in the city are shrouded in darkness. At this hour one might feel that time has stood still, that those who first clothed Salzburg in festive garb, were never hounded out of it, and that all is well in a world that knows such beauty. But, into the stillness a sudden siren howls. The C.-in-C.'s car roars past. HILDE SPIEL

PALESTINE LOST

When Jews to Palestine take flight
And claim the Mandate as their right,
Great Britain halts the stricken horde,
An angel with a flaming sword,
And sovereign rights with force affirms
If challenged on the Mandate's terms,
The Jew protests, the Arab warns—
The Mandate is a crown of thorns.

Though Britain is a League Trustee,
And Palestine no Colony,
She counts it in the British Zone
And treats its interests as her own,
While not unmindful of her case
For building a strategic base,
Nor will this sacred trust lay down,
Mandated to the British Crown.

Despite Great Britain's arduous toil,
The Holy Land is barren soil,
The awkward fact she cannot gloss
That Palestine is Britain's cross,
A heavy cross, a grievous care,
A load almost too great to bear;
Yet Britain must her path pursue,
(The cross is carried by the Jew.)

SAGITTARIUS

AT THE PROMS

THE popularity of the Proms, more overwhelming this year than ever before, presents some puzzling features. On practically every night of the eight-week season the immense auditorium is sold out; and yet a fair proportion of the programmes are not at all "popular." Why do people turn up in August in their thousands to hear a programme which would only half fill the Stoll on a winter Sunday?

I can think of two possible reasons. First, there is democratic magic in the word "Prom." The homely abbreviation itself, the associations of fifty years, the genial memory of Sir Henry—all these things persuade the timid concert-goer that he won't feel out of his depth. The terrible accusation of intellectual snobbery, which might well be levelled against him as patron of a "Symphony Concert," cannot conceivably apply to attendance at a "Prom." In short, the Proms are thought of as the people's concerts, and can therefore afford to take in their stride a string of novelties and quasi-novelties which would wreck an ordinary winter series.

As a second reason for their popularity I would give sheer convenience. There is something very satisfactory to the public in the spectacle of this solid two-months block of music-making, for which one can without difficulty acquire an entire prospectus in advance, make one's choice, book well ahead and settle down in comfortable anticipation of the event. In the winter everything is so much more muddling; the ordinary member of the public finds it extremely difficult to keep track of eight or nine competing orchestras giving curiously similar concerts all over the town. What is badly wanted, as I have said before, is a monthly prospectus containing details of *all* London orchestral concerts in advance; if the various orchestras had the sense to get together and organise this convenience, all would benefit and a great deal of public support would flow their way which is at present dissipated in uncertainty and confusion.

Among recent novelties at the Proms have been the *Fifth Symphony* of Prokofiev, the *Suite Symphonique* of Bloch and a *Nocturne* by Lennox Berkeley. Disillusioned by the musical results of Soviet *Gleichschaltung*, as displayed in the inane *Ninth Symphony* of Shostakovich and Prokofiev's blatant *Ode to the End of the War*, we awaited the latter's *Fifth* with a certain anxiety. I don't, however, agree with an eminent colleague that the music is worthless. The first movement, it is true, contains a good deal of pseudo-massive diatonic masonry behind which one feels that time will reveal the rubble, and the whole work runs to an

excess of four-square rhythms, and indeed of "four-four" time. It is true also that both first and last movements build up their climaxes by the same method of inexorable, emphatic repetition—what one might call the Molotov style of musical composition. On the other hand Prokofiev shows himself at every point a real, thorough musician, with every fascinating trick at his fingers' ends; and his new symphony contains at least one movement (the second: a Scherzo-March) whose brilliance is both personal and innately Russian. Elsewhere one gets the impression of a magnificent musical organism functioning *in vacuo*: an organism denied its natural outlet of grotesque satire and prevented by emotional under-development from adequately filling out the grand design of a major symphony.

No one who knows Bloch's output (and above all the intensely passionate *Schelomo*) would think of accusing *him* of emotional under-development; and yet his *Suite Symphonique* is, for him, a curiously cool and impersonal utterance. Apart from some characteristic harmony built up from fourths, it would be quite difficult to guess its composer; the middle movement, in particular, is singularly close to the Brahms of the *Fourth Symphony* and the *St. Antoni Variations*, not only because it consists of 22 short variations on a ground bass, but because of resemblances in gait and lay-out. It is none the less a very beautiful piece of academic music, and it may be that with repetition the worrying impression of anonymity will fade, and Bloch's personality emerge the more powerfully for its apparent eclipse. The last movement, however, seems to me irredeemably trivial.

Lennox Berkeley's *Nocturne* has his usual distinction of manner and contains some exquisite patterns of cool, watery sound. The sequence of his thought, however, is not always easy to follow, and in general the piece is attractive rather than captivating. I feel strongly that what Mr. Berkeley now needs is to broaden his style without coarsening it, and to establish contact with a larger public by way of, say, a concerto or a work for the stage: ballet or comic opera should suit his charming talent down to the ground. This delicate and well-proportioned *Nocturne* was immediately followed by Vaughan Williams's early and immensely inflated *Sea Symphony;* and not for the first time one was tempted to indulge the vain wish that a pair of composers might swap certain of their characteristics. How much better the *Sea Symphony* would be if its musical ideas had been tested by a more fastidious ear; and how much more effective the *Nocturne* if its composer possessed that instinctive grasp of what tells, what gets across in a big hall to a big public.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

RADIO NOTES

JOHN HAMPSON'S programme on Virginia Woolf might have been a great deal better than it was. The fatal word "feature" indicated what one had to expect, and one got it. That is to say, one got a dialogue of a quite unconvincing and unprofitable kind, between (presumably) Mr. Hampson and an unsuccessful business man (one assumes him unsuccessful, since he showed no glimmer of intelligence) in which the latter played the stooge, with such remarks as "A bit difficult, wasn't she?" "Oh nonsense," "She didn't know the first thing about dogs," "Why didn't she tell us how many cars people had?" and was put in his place by Mr. Hampson and his readers, who kept reiterating, "She desired to know the truth about life," "You see it *is* life that she writes about," and reading extracts aloud to prove it. The feminine reader had an unfortunate voice for the part—high, slightly twanging, suggesting a quite different background from Virginia Woolf's; the voice should have been lower, deeper, more cultivated. Far the best parts of the programme were the three contributed personal descriptions at the end; Edith Sitwell's vivid portrait, an extract from E. M. Forster's Rede lecture, and Mr. Hampson's own account of his first meeting with her. But why does the B.B.C. stick to this stale technique of imaginary dialogue between an intelligent person and a nit-wit? Why not between two intelligent people, who both of them know what they are talking about and can meet on equal ground, and, by differing and discussing, can throw light on their subject? Why this assumption that one of the parties must be ignorant and is there to be talked down by the other? We have had it again and again, and each time it ruins what might be a good programme. I am ignorant of the precise meaning of the word "feature"; does it necessarily involve this depressing kind of conversation?

I am not sure whether Mr. W. R. Rodger's portrait of an Ulster country minister among his flock was "feature" or not, but I am rather afraid that this was what was the matter with it. That is, it was not merely a dramatic sketch, with real characters talking; (when it was this, it was delightful); but strange whimsies, moralities, and imaginary interlocutors intruded, making the programme fancy, making the minister a meditative chatterbox. All the same, the programme had charm, and did suggest the Ulster countryside.

The play "Charles the King," adapted from Mr. Maurice Colbourne's play of some years back, did not suggest Charles I. Ivor Novello, as Charles, had impossibly unlikely things to say, to which his deep and fluent English tones gave no verisimilitude. Charles was a Scot; he squeaked; he stammered; he left long and embarrassing pauses in the conversation which froze his hearers; he was an unamiable man. Nor would he have held forth on the crushing of England under "the golden heel of finance"; an eager financier himself, he was the last person to despise money. The whole picture had that romantic falseness which writers about the Stuarts are apt to impart; and not even Miss Yvonne Arnaud's gay and Gallic Henrietta Maria redeemed it from moonshine.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*Sunday, September 8th.* Going Abroad (7 p.m.).

Monday. The Severn Bore (8 p.m.); The School for Scandal (9.15 p.m.); Schubert recital (11.25 p.m.).

Tuesday. From Borstal to Newgate (L.P. 10 a.m.); William Walton Concert (9.15 p.m.); Chopin Recital (Moiseiwitsch, 10.15 p.m.).

Wednesday. The Murder of Constable Gutteridge (L.P. 10.40 a.m.).

Thursday. Whither Tomtopia? (8.30 p.m.); Marriage of True Minds (9.30 p.m.).

Friday. Poetry Promenade (11.3 p.m).

Saturday. Unesco (Dr. Julian Huxley, 7.45 p.m.).

J. V. STE-MAXIME

THE MOVIES

"Ivan the Terrible," at the Tatler
"London Town," at the Leicester Square Theatre

The new Eisenstein film, the first since he made *Alexander Nevsky* seven years ago, is another magnificent essay on the art of the cinema. Eisenstein's elaborate theories of direction—outlined in his book, *The Film Sense*, at which I suggest a glance before visiting the Tatler—are synthesised in this picture: a classical tragedy whose artistic and technical brilliance will find few rivals. True, this film has its weaknesses. In his search for dramatic intensity, Eisenstein has slowed the action down to a point where it conflicts with his attempt to capture the spirit of a whole epoch of Russian history. He has relied on a good deal of symbolism from his actors, using them to reflect the interplay of personalities and historical forces in a way that reminded me of the technique of mime so brilliantly exploited many years ago by Fritz Kortner in *Warning Shadows*. But no criticism of these or other aspects can diminish the stature of a film in which photography, sound track and performance are so beautifully blended.

Nikolay Cherkasov, who already has a long record of achievement in Soviet films, plays Ivan, the Tsar ambitious to consolidate his infant state, to safeguard its frontiers from Mongol and German, to smash the internal conspiracy of the Boyars. In this, the first part of a planned trilogy, we follow Ivan from his

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JONATHAN CAPE

coronation to the victory against the Mongols at Kazan, the murder of his wife, and his voluntary exile to Alexandrov to await a new summons to the throne from the people of Moscow. Cherkasov and his colleagues have responded wonderfully to the demands made upon them. They were not asked to be puppets in a sweeping, superficial historical spectacle. They had to bring out the character of Ivan, the monarch without friends, tormented by doubts about the justice of his mission. At the same time, they had to personify all the difficulties he had to overcome in his struggle to make a nation out of a Russia torn between Byzantium and barbarism.

In this film, as in *Alexander Nevsky*, Prokofiev has collaborated with Eisenstein to match the music to the pictorial and dramatic balance of each scene. Ear and eye are almost overpowered by the richness of the composition, by the masterly integration of theme and background, cast and action, sound and atmosphere. I do not think that anyone can claim *Ivan the Terrible* is entertainment in the normal sense: it demands too much from the mind and the emotions of the spectator. But it is an indispensable part of any education in the sense of film.

London Town, in dreary contrast, is at best only patchy commercial entertainment. At worst, notably in a pointless and pretentious daffodil ballet, it is maudlin and vulgar. Sid Field, who is one of the funniest comedians on the halls, has to play the understudy who gets his chance through the winsome trickery of his little daughter. The story, weak enough in itself, would matter little if the film had any coherence. But it serves as a peg for a series of song-and-dance routines which are as tedious as they are lavish. Add to these some colour photography of the Thames—which has no apparent connection with the story and looks like clippings from a Fitzpatrick travelogue—two or three amusing turns by Mr. Field which are taken straight off the boards and have nothing to do with the cinema, and the least glamorous cast which was ever assembled before a camera, and you have the recipe for a feature which has had months of extravagant publicity. To rival Hollywood, Mr. Rank has imported Wesley Ruggles to produce a musical which has none of the American virtues and could be used as a textbook to illustrate some of the worst traditions in British film-making.

There are some revivals around. At the Astoria, the junior Douglas Fairbanks plays both leads in the Dumas story of *The Corsican Brothers*. The Hampstead Everyman is showing the Preston Sturges *Palm Beach Story* next week, to be followed by Renoir's *Les Bas Fonds* and *The Southerner*.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

Correspondence

OCCUPATION OF JAPAN

SIR,—In the early days of the occupation of Germany I read with particular interest the reactions of members of the Occupation Force to the policy that they were ordered to put into effect. It did not then occur to me that I should myself become a critic of the policy that the Commonwealth Occupation Forces are now applying to the occupation of Japan.

There are in essentials only two approaches to the problem of occupying Japan. In accordance with the first of these a strict military occupation would be enforced. Commonwealth troops would always carry arms; senior officers, preceded by D.R.s., would always be accompanied by posses of junior officers when driving outside camp; occupation troops would be given preference over Japanese in trams, ferries and vehicles; in short, all the panoply of war of a well-equipped, well-disciplined and highly efficient military machine would be a regular feature of the B.C.O.F. area. The country districts would be frequently and thoroughly searched to prevent the accumulation of arms and ammunition. The fact of occupation would be brought home to even the most inaccessible villages by low-flying aircraft. In their dealings with the occupying force—and such dealings would be kept to a minimum—the Japanese would find "the foreigners" stern but just.

The alternative to this suggestion is a policy of cultural penetration. Such a policy would naturally involve convincing the Japanese that the Commonwealth Occupation Force is not drawn from a federation of totalitarian militarist States. It would include the maximum of responsible fraternisation. To prevent abuse, fraternisation would have to be rigidly controlled in the interests of both sides.

The present occupation policy seems to fall midway between the two that I have suggested. In the first place, with the exception of Military and Service Police, I have not seen troops of the Occupation Force carrying arms. Military pomp and circumstance is entirely absent. On the contrary, the living conditions of senior officers in my part of the B.C.O.F. area compare most unfavourably with those enjoyed by Japanese officers during their occupation of Java. This fact must be known to local Japanese. I have myself had the experience of being almost crowded off a ferry by a host of Japanese with far more experience of ferry-catching than I have. In fact I am becoming accustomed, when I am away from camp, to being treated merely as a tourist in uniform.

Nor can it be said that we are implementing the second policy that I put forward. B.C.O.F. directives stress the fact that it is forbidden to enter Japanese private houses or take part in their family life; that unofficial dealings with them should be kept to a minimum; that private houses, cafés, hotels and brothels are all alike out of bounds unless specifically licensed by the military authorities. Very few places are in fact licensed. The forms and regulations that hedge in travelling for Other Ranks makes many of them reluctant to leave camp. I have heard it said that we might be in Buckinghamshire for all we see of Japan and the Japanese. Such is the position at the moment. I feel that it has the disadvantages of both of the policies I have mentioned with the virtues of neither.

While the first policy that I put forward is clear-cut and would be easy to administer, it makes heavy demands on the taxpayers' money in the shape of equipment and fuel, and would certainly prove as unpopular over a period of time as the occupation of the Rhineland eventually did after the war of 1914–1918. It would seem more practical, therefore, and certainly more in keeping with the claims of civilisation that the Occupation Forces should be regarded as ambassadors of culture and given as much opportunity to meet Japanese and take part in their social and cultural life as is possible, provided always that safeguards against abuse of the policy are strictly maintained. My experience is that educated Japanese take a keen interest in the "foreigners," are anxious to learn about their way of life and would welcome them into their homes. I feel that we are letting slip a great opportunity, that is well worth the risks that accompany it.

OCCUPATION FORCES OFFICER

REACTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

SIR,—Your article on South Africa on August 24th was a welcome contribution to the sort of publicity many South Africans would like South Africa to get. I shall make brief reference to it later. We are somewhat resentful of the fact that progressive British opinion, which is both well-informed and vocal, remains comparatively silent, and apparently apathetic about a British Dominion which, since the defeat of Fascism in Germany and Italy, is probably the most reactionary country in the world.

This feeling of resentment is exacerbated from time to time. Recent news messages from the Rand, reporting the African mineworkers' strike, and containing the information that strikers were *literally* beaten back to work, were published in the British Press without any comment, save in the *Daily Worker*.

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I should like to fill in some of the background to such reports, for the facts, although well known to most of your readers, are probably frequently overlooked.

Taxation compels the African in the Reserves to seek employment outside the Reserves. His freedom of movement is so restricted by the Pass-laws that, unless he can show that he has employment to go to, he cannot leave the Reserves. Compliance with this regulation is possible in theory, but in practice rarely so, unless he signs on with a Mines Recruiting agent in the Reserves. Thus the African is driven to the mines by economic compulsion, and discriminatory legislation. On the mine the African is housed with other male Africans in compounds (barracks), there being no provision made for his family. The average wage of the African mine-worker is £57 per annum, plus fairly meagre rations. It is illegal for any African to strike, and African trade unions are not recognised under the Industrial Conciliation Act, the African worker thus being denied the right to enter into legal agreements with his employer, and the right to collective bargaining. Finally, although the African is a tax-payer, he has no rights of citizenship. These are some of the facts, but there are hundreds more, equally distressing.

When news of the strikes on the Rand came through the London Gas Strike was on. Inevitably one made comparisons. When one reads about English "squatters," one thinks wryly of the thousands of African families, who, through lack of housing facilities, literally squatted on their haunches in the bare veldt outside Johannesburg, and were attacked by the police for attempting to erect hessian shelters for protection against a pitiless downpour. They were contravening a bye-law. (It is noteworthy that this treatment was meted out to them at the instigation of the Johannesburg Municipal Council, of which the S.A. Labour Party has control.) When one hears that prominent members of the Communist Party in Johannesburg have been arrested for inciting African mine-workers to strike for a living wage, one remembers that any South African Fascist can stand up in public and shout "Heil, Hitler" with impunity. When one considers that the leader of the party in power in South Africa has a voice, at Uno, in the affairs of other nations, and a respected voice at that. . . .

Finally I should like to draw attention to an obvious omission in the article referred to above. No mention is made of the Communist Party of South Africa. I should like to point out that the Communist Party is the only party in S.A. which fights for the rights of all workers, irrespective of race, creed or colour.

SOUTH AFRICAN

RUSSIAN ANXIETY

SIR,—I wish to thank Lord Horder for his support of my proposition, and I agree with his view of the desirability of not leaving, if it be possible, such vital decisions altogether to our statesmen. Hence my letter. I also note the statement in a broadcast this week by Mr. Harold Nicolson, who may be supposed to have some knowledge of politics, that "no Englishman thinks his country likely to attack Russia."

That my letter would provoke heat and rudeness from Kremlinophiles—I distinguish these from Russophiles among whom I would count myself—was of course to be expected. But such assertions as that I have not "even a bowing acquaintance with politics," even were this true, are in themselves no argument. The conclusions and predictions published during the past thirty years in my various psychological contributions to political sociology have not remained unconfirmed by the course of events. Mr. Seeley informs me that to-day no State wants war. That was one of the main points in my letter where it was particularly applied to Russia. But it will not be possible to prevent wars unless one is willing calmly to investigate their causes.

The responses to my letter again illustrate the difficulty of conveying the idea of surplus anxiety derived from within, since it is always denied by the victims of it. Anxiety is seldom wholly irrational. Usually it is generated from both internal and external sources (though I should repudiate the suggestion of one contributor that it can ever be due to "ignorance") and only the latter source is admitted. Even a neurotic who is afraid of venturing out of doors lest he be struck by lightning can maintain that after all people do get struck by lightning, so that his anxiety is "justified." Although I hold the likelihood of our declaring war on Russia to be extremely remote, it is of course not inconceivable or impossible. The question at issue is whether the Kremlin estimate of its probability does or does not deviate from the actuality.

The red herring of the atomic bomb, which has been such a godsend to our extremists, was sure to turn up. Yet it is easy to prove that the morbid suspiciousness which thwarts our wish for friendly collaboration long antedates it. Actually the scientists revealed so much of the data that the necessary knowledge is unlikely by now to be confined to any one country. It is true that the United States declined to place their manufacturing processes and material at the disposal of a country whose friendly intentions for world peace have been as yet imperfectly manifested, but in the service of that ideal they have offered to surrender them entirely to an international body who should have complete charge of them.

It is a pity that no contributor has discussed an alternative hypothesis to my own which I have heard mooted: namely, that the apparent Kremlin anxiety does not really exist but is feigned for reasons of internal politics. It would be interesting to see this argued.

In a leading article you, sir, suggest that I turn my attention to the anxieties of the United States. They would undoubtedly make an interesting study, though one difficult to compress into the space of a letter. I would only point out here (1) that her excessive disarmament has given much concern to those alive to her international commitments, (2) that, as we have twice had grave occasion to rue, it is very hard to provoke America to war, and (3) that the internal complexity of American politics, with the consequent instability of foreign policy and lack of any firm or consistent purpose, stands in striking contrast to the single-mindedness and relative freedom from distraction enjoyed by those in charge of the destinies of Russia.

ERNEST JONES

WIVES IN GERMANY

SIR,—It was interesting to notice in Maj.-Gen. O'Donnell's letter just those subtle distortions which he accuses you of having used.

He writes, for example, that there is a monthly ration of only one and a half bottles of spirits. The fact is that this is normally supplemented by a greater quantity of French, Dutch and German spirits, including cognac and champagne, all of which, like the British produced spirits, are obtained free of duty, and consequently far more cheaply than by people at home. There is also, quite apart from NAAFI supplies, an allotment of spirits and wines from German sources.

Similarly, the "women of leisure" epithet referred obviously to the wives in Germany, not at home. The Maj.-Gen. is surely aware that this excessive leisure is already considered a problem to be anticipated. A recent letter in the British Zone Review will bear this out.

I have watched, at close hand, many of the activities of the CCG, preparatory to the wives' arrival next week. Arising from this, the points to stress (entirely ignored in the War Office letter) seem to me to be:

(1.) The complete disregard of both moral and political standards of judgment in the requisitioning of houses and furniture. The officer (or OR) concerned chooses a house only from the point of view of his comfort, prestige, etc. The occupants are in no wise

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considered. The subsequent requisitioning follows automatically. The people thrown out of their homes may be former victims of Fascism, they may be deportees from the East, they may have been dislodged from former homes by requisitions, they may be aged invalids—it does not matter; if Major X wants the house he gets it. On the average, Major X and his wife displace 10 Germans, who are not even allowed to take their beds with them.

(2.) The establishment of wives in luxurious conditions here will entail the complete setting up of a foreign ruling caste who will be divided from the people they rule by a vast chasm, the difference in their standards of life. The British will resort only to their own haunts, will only meet one another socially. Germans will be encountered exclusively as servants, whether clerks and typists in their offices, or housemaids, cooks and handymen in their homes.

In my experience, the officers who are bringing their wives to Germany are not staying here because of any idealist sense of vocation, but most are staying on because they consider that they will be able to lead a life of far greater comfort than in Britain, and out of all proportion to the real services they render.

Finally, it must be said in mitigation that Housing Commissions are now being set up at all levels to consider the entire problem of Services and CCG requisitions in relation to the German housing shortage. As, however, the damage has in most cases already been done, this belated endeavour to avoid senseless waste and prevent gross unfairness tends to be a fairly futile gesture. SOLDIER IN CCG.

TWO ROADS TO SOCIALISM

SIR,—What is the exact implication of Stalin's warning to Mr. Morgan Phillips of the *Daily Herald* about what a trouble the "clever and experienced bourgeoisie" may prove to be to British Labour? Are they to be liquidated, as, to quote further from your article, "we move towards a full Socialist economy"? Does it not strike you that such utterances are just as pernicious, violent, and silly, as any printed in the Fascist press in Italy or Germany? If this is the message resulting from the Labour Party's Goodwill Mission to Russia all who do not agree with them must emigrate, if allowed to, or look out for trouble.

Surely in the genuine interests of Socialism this Asiatic nonsense and talk of violence must be dropped.
SACHEVERELL SITWELL

[In this rhetorical question Mr. Sitwell is endeavouring to ascribe to Stalin "implications" precisely opposed to what he actually said. In the talk recorded by Mr. Morgan Phillips, the Soviet Premier emphasised that Marxist-Leninists did not think that the "shorter but more difficult" road by which the Russian people had attained Socialism in 1917 at the cost of bloodshed was "the only way to Socialism." Britain, in his view, was moving towards Socialism by the Parliamentary method. This involved no bloodshed, but "it was a longer process"; and, though he did not think that Britain would have to face anything like the difficulties that had faced Russia after the revolution—civil war and famine—he warned the Labour Mission that our "clever and experienced bourgeoisie" might prove more of a problem in Britain than had been the case in Russia where the old ruling class was merely "silly." We can find in this no justification for Mr. Sitwell's transparent desire to impute to Stalin (and ourselves) an "Asiatic" appetite for "violence" or "liquidation." If a few rich *rentiers*, compelled at last in a Socialist society "to get off the backs of the poor," preferred to emigrate rather than earn their satisfactions by work, their departure would not sensibly impoverish the community.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

FILMS AND THE CHILD MIND

SIR,—The deleterious effects of the cinema upon the child mind is by no means as certain as is assumed by the writer of "Films and the Child Mind." Dr. Cyril Burt in his "Young Delinquent," a standard work upon the subject of juvenile delinquency, discusses the problem at some length. He states that, in his experience, the commission of crime by imitation of the films is confined only to defectives and that, in many cases, the films are given as reasons for crime by delinquents because they are shrewd enough to realise that it may be a popular excuse with the adults to whom they are speaking. This may well be the case with the boy of fifteen whose statement is recorded in the article, a statement which, by the way, proves nothing either one way or the other and is not reliable as an illustration.

Dr. Burt realises the harmful moral atmosphere of the cinema, but he is very doubtful of the actual harm done to children and young persons. "It is clear," he says, "that in comparison with the incalculable number of films that are manufactured and released, the offences resulting are infinitesimally few. The victims are almost wholly those who, temperamentally or otherwise, are already disposed to anti-social conduct; and the cinema can do little more than feed and fan the latent spark." The role of the cinema in helping to "feed and fan the latent spark" is well compensated by its effect upon the healthy minded for whom, Dr. Burt says, it provides "an alternative, not a provocative, to mischievous amusement." This conclusion is partially born out by the report *Young Offenders* by Carr Saunders, Mannheim and Rhodes, in which it is stated that of the cases investigated, 17 per cent. of the offenders and 20 per cent. of the controls visited the cinema two or more times a week.

The control exercised by the British Board of Film Censors is probably as good as any control is likely to be, and there is no guarantee whatsoever that a State Board would be any fairer or any more reasonable. Nor is it possible to prevent children and young persons going to the cinema and seeing films which are adjudged unsuitable for them. The remedy lies in reducing the number of juveniles who are "temperamentally or otherwise . . . disposed to anti-social conduct," and this can only be done by attacking from all sides the disharmony in family life which is its main cause. A. G. ROSE

GEORGE GISSING

SIR,—I am engaged on research into the life of George Gissing, but before finally completing my book, would like to appeal to your readers for permission to see, and perhaps use, any letters they may have, written by Gissing.

I sincerely hope that any reader of your journal who can help me will do so, and any such letters sent to me at the above address will be taken great care of, and returned as soon as possible.

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ROUTLEDGE

BOOKS IN GENERAL

PAINTED in delicate colours, as if on silk, a romantic picture of an Academy for the higher education of women has been left by Tennyson:

> There sat along the form, like morning doves
> That sun their milky bosoms on the thatch,
> A patient range of pupils.

As for the principal, she

> . . . at a board by tome and paper sat,
> With two tame leopards couch'd beside her throne,
> All beauty compass'd in a female form.

The Princess was written in 1849, the year when an Institution for classes in all branches of female education was opened in Bedford Square, the second of its kind; the first, Queen's College, having been started a year before in Harley Street. These were both private self-contained establishments without academic status, and no doubt it was proof of the poet's progressive mind that he could imagine any kind of University admitting women. Nevertheless, the determined fighters for University examinations and curriculum would not have recognized themselves in his portrait. One does not associate Emily Davies, who in 1869 opened the Institution at Hitchin which later became Girton College, with the panther; nor do group photographs of the earliest lady students in their long skirts, high-necked collars and stiff boater-hats bear any special resemblance to morning doves. These unfrivolous pioneers of feminine learning were homespun rather than silken, moved not merely by a love of erudition for its own sake, but by a fighting spirit which frequently had to overcome silent contempt or active opposition among their own families and friends. Such obstacles were too formidable for all save the boldest, and for centuries some women must have gone through life frustrated and sullen, tormented by an unquenched thirst for knowledge.

A few there had always been who were not afraid or ashamed publicly to reveal their peculiar taste. As early as 1694 Mary Astell in *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*, suggested the foundation of a Female Academy of Learning, for which it was believed that Queen Anne had promised financial support. Although the idea, killed by public ridicule, never came to anything, it proved that even at that time there were some women who were ready to consider it, and actually one of the greatest of English women scholars, Elizabeth Elstob, was born a few years earlier, in 1683, at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Elizabeth was the daughter of a Newcastle merchant, Ralph Elstob, whose family traced its origin back for nearly four hundred years, to 1304, "as high as Adam, not Adam in Paradise, but Adam de Elnestob," as she wrote humorously to her brother, after drawing up the family pedigree. On the maternal side she believed herself to be descended from Welsh kings; whether or not she inherited royal blood from her mother, she certainly derived from her the intense love of learning which was her outstanding characteristic. Elizabeth's mother admired learning, especially in women, and encouraged the little girl's early love of reading. By the time she was eight years old, she knew Latin grammar, but then her mother died, and her guardian would only allow her to learn French, considering that one tongue was enough for any woman. If her guardian was discouraging, her brother was sympathetic, and when she was older he helped her to go on with her studies. This brother, William, to whom she was deeply devoted, had been educated at Newcastle and Eton, then at Cambridge and finally at Oxford, where he took his degree and became a Fellow of University College. When his sister grew up she went to live with him, and under his direction she studied eight languages, including Latin and Anglo-Saxon. In 1709, when she was twenty-six, she published by subscription an *English-Saxon Homily on the Nativity of St. Gregory*, dedicated to Queen Anne, and in the preface she wrote: "I know it will be said, What has a Woman to do with Learning? This I have known urged by some Men, with an Envy unbecoming that greatness of Soul, which is said to dignify their Sex. For if Women may be said to have Souls, and that their Souls are their better part, and that what is Best deserves our greatest Care for its Improvement; furthermore, if good Learning be one of the Soul's greatest Improvements; we must retort the Question, Where is the Fault in Women seeking after Learning? Why are they not to be valu'd for acquiring to themselves the noblest Ornaments? What hurt can this be to themselves? What Disadvantage to Others? But there are two things usually opposed to Women's Learning. That it makes them impertinent, and neglect their household Affairs. Where this happens, it is a Fault. But it is not the Fault of Learning, which rather polishes and refines our Nature, and teaches us that Method and Regularity, which disposes us to greater Readiness and Dexterity in all kinds of Business. I do not observe it so frequently objected against Women's Diversions, that they take them off from Household Affairs. Why therefore should those few among us, who are lovers of Learning, altho' no better account cou'd be given of it than its being a Diversion, be deny'd the Benefit and Pleasure of it, which is both so innocent and improving." She goes on to express her surprise and shame that the same charge should be carried on with even greater violence by some of her own sex.

Undaunted herself by public opinion, she next set to work on an edition of the *Homilies of Aelfric* (1006), and Lord Oxford arranged to obtain financial help from the Queen for its publication, but for some reason the printing was not completed and the book never appeared. In 1715 she published *Rudiments of Grammar for the English-Saxon Tongue*. It so happens that the texts both of the *Homily* and the *Rudiments* begin with the letter G (the first one, "Gregory, the Holy Father, the Apostle of the English Nation," and the second, "Grammar is the Art of Speaking and Writing, truly and properly"), and in each case her portrait is inserted within the initial letter. She is dressed with some regard to the prevailing fashion, her bosom rising out of a low-cut gown and her forehead partly concealed by ringlets; the nose is straight but not small, chin firm, mouth wide, a trifle sullen yet not unhumorous. She was much esteemed by her contemporaries in the world of scholars and was known as "a female student of the University." Unfortunately for her, the pleasant Oxford life which suited her so well came to an abrupt end with her brother's death. She had had some private means, but book production was expensive and somehow her little income had all slipped away, so that she found herself suddenly not only without a home but without means of support. For a time she accepted help from her friends; eventually she set up a girls' school in Evesham, which seems to have cost her an incessant struggle.

On starting the school she sold some of her books "with abundance of sorrow," and left the remainder, as well as her manuscripts, with a woman friend; this friend subsequently went out to join a daughter in the West Indies, and the precious books and papers all disappeared. In any case, even if the books had not been lost, she who now "scarcely had time to eat" certainly had none in which to pursue her private studies. Her health was not good, and the bustling routine must have been most irksome to a woman of her scholarly temperament. Her friend, Mrs. Chapone, who herself kept a boarding-school, sent out a circular letter on her behalf, asking for subscriptions, and Queen Caroline responded by giving £100, which was to be contributed by her every five years, but she died and the donation was not renewed. In the end the school appears to have failed, and we find Elizabeth writing to a friend, George Ballard, with reference to a post at some other school, which must at one time have been offered to her, "March 7th, 1734–5: I often compare myself to poor John Tucker (this should be Thomas Tusser), whose Life I read when a girl, in Winstanley's *Lives of the Poets*, which affected me so much that I cannot forget it yet. He is there described to have been an honest, industrious, poor man, but notwithstanding his indefatigable industry, as the author writes, 'no butter would stick on his bread.'" In one sense no butter stuck on her bread either, for she seems to have left no more than seventy guineas at her death, but she was to find a new contentment, and the end of her disappointing struggles. Mrs. Pendarves (later Mrs. Delaney) recommended her to her friend the Duchess of Portland; she was appointed governess to the ducal children in 1739, and she remained in the Portland household until her death in 1756, at the age of seventy-three.

Elizabeth Elstob may be called the prototype of women dons. Not that these are all alike, any more than male dons, who, though they may be able administrators, Members of Parliament, men of the world, yet remain for ever symbolised in popular imagination as absent-minded and eccentric—probably bearded—professors. In the same way, there is an idea of the woman scholar, brilliant yet impractical, sharp-tongued yet shy, and above all, like Elizabeth Elstob, nun-like in devotion to her chosen work. A learned woman may inspire a lover as passionate as the lover of Heloïse, or bear a child as devoted as the daughter of Madame Curie, but they are exceptions to the generally accepted rule of celibacy. The driving force of a scholar's life is cerebral rather than emotional; there is always delicate excitement to be derived from new discoveries in a Manorial Roll or Anglo-Saxon text; perhaps also, the scholar, like the artist, knowing herself in her own supreme values to be the equal of man, sees him without some of the glamour which dazzles her less gifted sisters. An anecdote may illustrate this attitude.

One summer afternoon a group of girl students sat outside their red-brick dwelling, under a cedar-tree, discussing with their tutor a recent book on the philosophy of history. Long shadows lay on the lawn as smooth as any in the ancient college gardens of the men, and below them the river sparkled green and silver between overhanging willow-branches. According to a theory in the book the position of women through the ages could be traced back to the hunting stage of mankind: the woman was handicapped because she had to carry the child and therefore depended upon her mate to bring her food. Somebody suggested that this would have been unnecessary if both had agreed to share their duty, and asked why the father should not have taken his turn in carrying the child. The don blinked at her questioner through horn-rimmed spectacles, crossed her feet in their well-cut low-heeled brown shoes, and remarked thoughtfully: "The man might have got tired of cawwying the child, and then he would have laid it down under the nearwest twee."

The little sun-dappled scene has glided away long long ago, like a leaf on the river of time; the don is dead, and some of the students who sat about her in their summer-frocks; those who live are elderly women now, troubled by matters more serious than their light-hearted questing into the ancestry of mankind. Yet the leaf is veined with the pattern of the woman-scholar's temperament, no matter what the period. The slender sensitive hands are awkward to-day with needle or duster as were Elizabeth Elstob's at the spinning wheel. She did not make a success of her school; and the don who to-day may fascinate generations of students at her college, has frequently failed to impress the inky fourth form when she started her career as a mistress at a provincial High School. But there is one important difference between the present and the past: in our own day women dons may lead satisfactory and useful lives with no greater degree of ability than their male colleagues; but two hundred years ago any woman who succeeded as a scholar, must indeed have had superlative gifts.

DAISY L. HOBMAN

ARISTOTLE'S POLITICS

The Politics of Aristotle. Translated with an Introduction, Notes and Appendices by Sir Ernest Barker. *Oxford University Press.* 15s.

Sir Ernest Barker's edition of Aristotle's *Politics*, undertaken as "a labour of love and a permanent consolation of such leisure as was left to the writer . . . among the anxieties and duties of the war" is an almost perfect illustration of what such a work should be. The four introductions on the historical background, the scientific, or, as I should prefer to call it, the philosophical background of the *Politics*, their substance and argument, and their vocabulary are models of scholarship; full and comprehensive, they are so clearly and elegantly written that the reader's instruction is mingled with delight. Each chapter is prefaced by a brief survey of its contents and the text is interspersed with explanatory passages bridging the gaps in the argument, which the unfinished nature of the work, consisting, as it does for the most part, of "memoranda written afterwards, in order to preserve a record of the results attained in lectures and discussions," entails. Sir Ernest expresses the hope that "something is here presented which may be of use to the students of the coming generation." The hope is abundantly justified. One could wish that somebody would do a similar job for the *Nicomachæan Ethics*, the greatest and in many ways, the most difficult of Aristotle's works. Sir Ernest himself, one hopes, may be encouraged to consider that it is not too late to perform so grateful an office.

The *Politics* strikes oddly upon the consciousness of the modern reader and flouts many of his pre-existing conceptions and prejudices, as for example, by the distinction which Aristotle makes between the "natural rulers" and the "naturally ruled," by his apparent ranking of women with slaves, by his hostility to democracy and his comparatively sympathetic treatment of tyranny. But Aristotle is essentially a moderate man and when one looks more closely, the affronts to current fashions of thinking are found to be considerably mitigated.

For example, it turns out that it is only among "the barbarians" that women are classified with slaves; among free peoples, the female and the slave are "naturally distinguished from one another"; as for the "naturally ruled," these are in fact "the barbarians." Slavery itself is justified as the necessary means to the realisation of an end. This end, which may be identified with the pursuit by a certain number of citizens of the highest life of which man is capable, roughly the life of disinterested intellectual and spiritual activity, expressing itself in the enjoyment and criticism of art, in original research and thinking in science and philosophy, and in contemplative speculation, cannot be pursued by men engaged in getting and spending. Therefore, there must be a class of men whose activities are devoted solely to production. It is for this reason that slaves and poor men are denied citizenship; they are "sacrificed," because, as Sir Ernest puts it, "citizenship is keyed so high" and "rich things have a high price." Aristotle's ideal constitution denies the vote to those whose property falls below a certain level. In effect, he admits to full citizenship only those whom we should now call the middle classes. This is because he identifies liberty with freedom from dependence on others, from economic anxiety and from absorption in mechanical labour, and citizenship is reserved for free men. He attacks democracy because it allows an absolute equality and not an equality proportionate to a man's standing in and contribution to society. But even here he admits much that has since become common ground among democrats, as for example, that the mass of the people has a faculty of collective judgment in politics, as in art, since "some appreciate one part, some another and all together appreciate all;" that the people alone know from experience where the shoe of government pinches and that their needs and wishes must, therefore, be consulted even by an absolute ruler in framing the laws. His advice to tyrants illustrates the governing principle of Aristotle's therapeutics: moderation. It is impossible to read his analysis in the Vth Book of the policies upon which totalitarian governments are all too often driven to embark, or his admonitions to tyrants on the dangers of getting "too big for their boots", without reflecting how often the former have been exemplified and the latter disregarded in subsequent and, not least, in contemporary history.

Where I think one must uncompromisingly dissent, is in the degree of interference with the individual he permits to the State—he defines the age for marriage, for example, and the number of permissible children—and the static conception of society which envisages the City State as the final form of political development. Aristotle's teleological conception of process—every process, for him, tends towards a goal which both determines its direction and ends its movement—led him to think of human development in terms of a succession of units of increasing self-sufficiency. Thus there is the man, the family, the village, the collection of villages and, finally, the City State, the natural, in the sense of being the wholly self-sufficient and, therefore, final and complete form of human association. "It is the end or consummation to which those associations move, and the 'nature' of things consists in their end or consummation." The consequences of the failure to recognise any political development beyond that of the City State proved as disastrous to the Greek world as a parallel failure to see beyond the Nation State bids fair to prove disastrous to the modern.

Why, it may be asked, in view of these limitations, study Aristotle? There are many answers. One is that the student of contemporary politics is enabled to watch familiar forces at work on a miniature stage, seeing everything very small and very clear as though he was looking at the contemporary scene through an inverted pair of field glasses. Again, one is entranced by the workings of a great mind. Aristotle was an extremely intelligent man and what he has to say on any subject is well worth listening to. He says it with a deceptive simplicity. Reading Aristotle again, one is struck afresh by the combination of profundity of content with terseness of expression. There is no fumbling, no diffuseness; each sentence contains a distinct statement; each statement fits into place in the argument and never oversteps its place. The mildness of the manner varies inversely with the pungency of the sense. Remarks, heavy with thought, are dropped so casually into the text, are dwelt upon so little, that it is only in retrospect that one realises their significance. Consider, for example, the following comment on proposals for communist legislation; "This has a specious appearance of benevolence. An audience accepts it with delight, supposing, especially when abuses under the existing system are denounced as due to private property, that under communism, everyone will miraculously become everyone else's friend . . ." But, Aristotle comments, "the real cause of these evils is not private property but the wickedness of human nature."

C. E. M. JOAD

SHORT STORIES

Pipe Night. By JOHN O'HARA. *Faber and Faber.* 7s. 6d.

House Under Mars. By NORAH HOULT. *Heinemann.* 8s. 6d.

Mrs. Privett. By LIONEL BONSEY. *Pilot Press.* 6s.

Many of the stories in *Pipe Night* first appeared in the *New Yorker*—a magazine with a higher literary standard than is often supposed. It would be a pity if the labels usually attached to John O'Hara's work—"tough," "slick," "school of Hemingway," etc.—should prevent anyone from reading this book. Of course they do apply—but O'Hara is unique among the group of Californian writers with which he has been associated by Edmund Wilson in *The Back Room Boys*. Wittier than Hemingway and Steinbeck, less gloomy than Faulkner and Erskine Caldwell, subtler than James Cain, he is of great value as a social historian. In *Appointment in Samarra* he gave a detailed account of the manners and conventions of provincial country-club life, and in *Butterfield 8* he did the same for the speak-easy era in New York. *Pipe Night* will be a reliable guide, a hundred years from now, to the dress, speech and behaviour of Americans to-day.

Impressively unsentimental (which is rare in an American author), O'Hara maintains a formidable impartiality towards his characters; the accuracy of his observation is deadly and final. This makes him extremely readable; perhaps fearing the charge of facility, he sometimes over-stresses statistics, affects a monotonous attention to detail; but even so he can never bore. We start a story in this new collection. It may be a gigolo crooner writing with illiterate cynicism to his pal Ted; it may describe lechery and Bourbon whiskey on Beverley Hills, mediocre couples at home, at night clubs and on the beach; it may be a grim obituary of a Real American—but at once the dialogue convinces, we know the description to be authentic. Then, before we have had enough, the story ends, and we are left in the air, expecting, hoping for more. Several stories do justify O'Hara's casual technique; a point is made that could not have been expressed in a different way. The others are entertaining but incomplete.

It is a temptation to take John O'Hara seriously; he does all he can to avoid this. At times he seems to write clumsily on purpose; he has no "message" (for which one is grateful), and accentuates the inconsequence and flippancy of his style. But there is an underlying individuality in his stories; they leave an impression of talent deliberately wasted on trivial matter. Will he for ever be content to spotlight and expose emotions no more profound than boredom, embarrassment and tepid desire? Will he never realise the full possibilities of his keen perceptive powers? At present his work is diverting; if he would look deeper into the human soul, it would be moving and important as well.

I should add, as a warning, that the idiom in which these stories are written is occasionally obscure to the English reader.

Some people will turn with relief from the abrupt economy of *Pipe Night* to the comforting solidity of *House Under Mars*; others will find it sadly pedestrian in contrast. Competent and sensitive, it is typical of the work of many gifted but uninspired lady novelists writing to-day. It describes life in a block of flatlets during the war; none of the characters quite cross the border-line from fiction into reality.

Mrs. Privett is a collection of humorous sketches in which a Chelsea landlady is the central figure. This character does cross the border-line; she is recognisable, and often amusing. Here she is experimenting with the telephone:

"Hullo," says Miss Nancy.
"Hullo," says Mrs. Privett.
There is a pause.
"Who is that?" says Miss Nancy.
"It's Mrs. Privett speaking."
"My darling Mrs. Privett, what are you doing?"
"I'm learning to telephone."
. . . "Where are you speaking from?"
"I'm at the telephone, miss."

This book was spoilt for me, however, by the author's roguish attitude where drink and love are concerned, and by a touch of that regional self-consciousness peculiar to Chelsea.

FRANCIS WYNDHAM

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Dr. HAWTREY'S ADVICE

Economic Re-birth. By R. G. HAWTREY. *Longmans.* 5s.

Dr. Hawtrey explains in the preface to his new volume that he has left the Treasury, and that his opinions commit nobody except himself. There is, however, no essential difference between what he said when he was still a regular civil servant and what he is saying now; for he enjoyed for many years the singular privilege of writing as a servant of the public and saying nevertheless pretty much what he wanted to say. In this book he sets out to discuss, in as simple language as possible, some of the main economic problems of readjustment after the unavoidable dislocations of war. Most of what he has to say refers mainly to Great Britain, though some of it, especially in the parts which deal with currency problems, has a much wider application. His general thesis is the familiar one that it cannot possibly be easy for a country as dependent on imports as Great Britain to adjust itself to the loss of its income from foreign investments, and to the sudden transition from being the world's chief creditor to being the largest debtor. He is also concerned with the problem of the inflationary pressure involved in the existence of "redundant" money created by wartime bank borrowing, or, in the countries where large allied forces were stationed, by the currency printed to cover their spending on the spot. And, inevitably, in relation to the British problem, he discusses wage-policy and the potentially inflationary effects of pressure for higher wages under a condition of full employment.

These are familiar problems, and Dr. Hawtrey's analysis of them contains no surprises for readers of his earlier books. Here again are the emphasis on the importance of re-building stocks to an adequate level and of preventing an undue rise of consumers' spending that would make this impossible; the disagreements with the Keynesian theory of interest rates; and the insistence that dear short-term money is a necessary instrument for keeping bank credit down below a dangerously inflationary level. There is also much good sense about the practical difficulties in the way of operating a system of price-controls effectively either in the sphere of capital goods or even in that of essential consumers' goods when the more extreme physical scarcities have been overcome.

More interesting than these pieces of analysis are Dr. Hawtrey's proposed remedies. In the first place, he wants a forced loan on bank balances for the purpose of getting rid of the potentially inflationary influence of the unspent margin of income now in the public's hands. He admits the inconveniences involved in this expedient, but holds them to be less than are involved in any alternative course. The doubt that suggests itself is whether in fact this unspent margin exists in the form of bank balances in this country on a scale that would make his proposed levy effective if it were imposed. He would hardly propose to put the levy on Savings Certificates, short-time bonds, or investments in Building Societies—or would he?

Dr. Hawtrey's second proposal follows upon a careful study of the change in Great Britain's external position. He points out, truly, that even when there is no longer a world scarcity of goods, scarcity may prevail in Great Britain because of the necessity of keeping imports within the means of making external payments. This, he argues, involves a continuance of controls for the purpose of imposing priorities for imports needed for essential uses. He argues that both this and the other indispensable objects of price-control could best be achieved by the State assuming a monopoly of all forms of wholesale dealing. This, he believes, would give the State complete control over the character of production, because it would become the sole source of the demand, to which all producers must respond. At the same time, it would leave the retailers free to order what they pleased out of the goods thus made available; and of course the State trading agencies would adapt their orders to the producers to the demands of the retailers, to the full extent to which these could be squared with the available supplies of materials, plant and man-power. In effect, Dr. Hawtrey proposes that, instead of setting out to nationalise production or indirectly to control production by licensing and price regulation, the State should interpose itself at an essential stage between producer and consumer, so as to become the supreme arbiter of the entire economic system.

This proposal, though stated by Dr. Hawtrey in unduly sweeping and simplified form, has considerable attractions, and makes his book eminently worth reading. What he proposes may be only one way among a number of establishing the controlled economy which is forced on this country by its changed economic situation. But it is surely one of the ways; and we may hope, in view of Sir Stafford Cripp's recent stand over cotton buying, that it is not being wholly lost sight of at the Board of Trade.

G. D. H. COLE

FOUR LIVES

Rise to Follow. By ALBERT SPALDING. *Frederick Muller.* 15s.

I Had a Pitch on the Stones. By JANE BROWN. *Nicholson and Watson.* 8s. 6d.

The Dark Thorn. By WREY GARDINER. *Grey Walls Press.* 9s. 6d.

Journey to Understanding. By PERCY REDFERN. *Allen and Unwin.* 10s. 6d.

To write an autobiography is to affirm one's belief in individual man, and here are four people, each as different from the other as chalk from cheese, writing down their lives in styles as diverse as their personalities, the only link between them that of their individualism. Three of them live by private enterprise, and the fourth is in open revolt against the totalitarian state. Two of them struggle against tremendous social and material odds, one of them creates his own difficulties and seems to like them, and the fourth goes through life favoured, both as artist and individual, by happy circumstances.

Rise to Follow is the unfinished autobiography of an American musician, though except for the American family background it is the life story of a cosmopolitan, a famous violinist of great culture and charm, and with an interest in other human beings all too rare in the virtuoso. The writer's childhood was a happy one, spent between America and Italy; he possessed an easy musical talent and a wise father who sent him off on provincial tours of France, to earn his living and escape the dangers of dilettantism.

The book describes the author's concert visits to most of the countries of Europe; his first not too successful visit to England was accounted for by Richter who explained that in England, to be a success, you must either wear short pants or a beard. There is a fascinating picture of life in Czarist Russia in 1910, and many shrewd observations on national characteristics. Mr. Spalding knows most of the eminent contemporary musicians and has stories about them that are spicy without being malicious, as when he describes Patti, past her prime, employing strategies which would do credit to Napoleon or General Lee:

> She would start the scale or *arpeggio* with aplomb, the fan in her outstretched arm slowly unfolding.

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SIGMA

This would continue to the register beyond which lay danger. Then with a sudden gesture, the arm would fly up, the fan snapped shut with a click, the audience would burst into a tumult of applause, drowning out both orchestra and voice, and triumph greeted a *fioritura* or a high note that was never heard.

It is all like good wine, delightfully stimulating. The story is interspersed with discussions of music and musical technique, and through it shines the witty, tolerant and sympathetic personality of the writer. One feels that had he not been a great musician, Mr. Spalding might have been a very good novelist.

I Had a Pitch on the Stones is an English cup of tea to Mr. Spalding's good wine. It tells the story of a woman's fight against poverty during her husband's long illness, and her attempt to rear a family by earning her living in the Caledonian Market. The book begins unpromisingly, its episodes are not well arranged, and Mrs. Brown doesn't make the best of her early material. But when she gets to the Market, the story leaps to life. From the moment the Browns arrive at the gates with a small vanload of goods, we live and learn with the author. We share the tension of the crowd waiting for the gates to open, we learn about runners and how to get a pitch, where to find merchandise and how to sell it; the weather becomes very important indeed. Here, almost everyone is a "character." There are failures, brilliant or pathetic; customers, nice and nasty; tot (old clothes) women, cranks, quacks, young and aged, all trying to earn a few shillings. And this stronghold of very private enterprise is bound by a tremendous sense of fraternity. Mrs. Brown tells of her own many kindnesses without self-consciousness, she takes them for granted. Now and again she is a bit unfair, as when she says that the children of the well-to-do are less attractive than those of the middle and working classes, or that the customer who says she "will think it over" has no intention of buying. But her prejudices are few and her sympathies wide. She has some scathing comments on the Means Test and a sensitive as well as sensible view of the ill effects of constant poverty and hardship on human beings. Her own story ends in success, but she does not cease to help and pity the failures.

Mr. Gardiner, the editor of *Poetry Quarterly*, says that Mr. Herbert Read once described his poems as having Byzantine glitter, and I don't see why that description shouldn't do for the whole of *The Dark Thorn*, a phenomenally sterile effort in spite of the non-stop high-pitched energy of its purple prose.

The writing covers, as far as one can gather, about two of the war years, and wraps itself round sex, illness, astonishing literary judgments, reflections on mother-fixation, book collecting, money and the lack of it, Mr. Gardiner's friends, drink and the Café Royal. The poetic prose is shot with lightning didacticisms: "Life is anecdotal, vaginal and visceral"; "We are all hammering at an unopen door, balancing carefully on an uncomfortable fence"; "It is a pity that love is often at bottom only a matter of bottoms." One almost comes to agree with Mr. Gardiner that "Too much of our prose is meaningless, with the profounder meaning that should be behind words."

And what good comes of it at last? "A new world will be born," declares Mr. Gardiner, "and we (Mr. Gardiner and his neo-romantic friends) will fight its intellectual battles." Clearly we are in for a long spell of anarchy.

Such writing might pass (unpublished) at twenty, but the author is twice as old as that, and it is all horribly adolescent. At the end of the book one is left with the impression that the writer's enormous capacity for feeling has become detached from all objects, and consequently little personality remains. The threat to write another book, "so completely free of all reticence that Rousseau and Henry Miller will seem a mass of repression by comparison," need not be taken too seriously, even by Mr. Gardiner. It wouldn't get past the police.

Mr. Redfern rose from humble beginnings to an important position in the Co-operative Movement, but *Journey to Understanding* is chiefly an account of his spiritual explorations. It tells how the writer came from secularism, through Tolstoyism, to Christianity, rejecting Marxism and scientific humanism on the way. In a manifesto at the end of the book Mr. Redfern offers a solution to many current world problems in the light of his own beliefs. He wants a Christian pacifist world and a federal Europe.

Besides being the story of the writer's spiritual development, the book throws light on many of the societies and movements at the end of the last century and the beginning of this—the Tolstoyan experiment at Purleigh, the Fabians, the Labour Church, the Women's Movement and the Co-operative Society. On the subject of co-operation in industry and production, Mr. Redfern has many interesting things to say. He regrets the complete divorce of consumer and producer interests which is characteristic of to-day.

Mr. Redfern has thought deeply and sincerely and for a long time about problems which have exercised man's mind from earliest history, and to which many of us feel there can be no infallible answer; he has answered these problems to his own satisfaction, and it is greatly to his credit that he is tolerant of others in spite of the strength of his own beliefs.

The chief drawback of the book is the style. One can forgive its unremitting seriousness, for it deals with serious topics, though the Purleigh experiment struck me as very funny, reading between the lines. But the style is clumsy. Mr. Redfern has an irritating way of describing himself in the third person, especially in his relations with his mother, which completely blurs the picture. He can write such hit and miss statements as "Every Saturday was three days long," and "Even the upper layer had its strata," and he invents very ugly near-business words, *omni-competent* and *misdemeanants*, for example. Above all, his predilection for the passive construction and the much divided subject and predicate allows him to write such a sentence as the following:

"It is with contraception, and the licence it gives in marriage and before it, that issue is reached."

It would be well worth while revising the English of any future edition.

DOROTHY BAKER

THE PROBLEM OF LANGUAGE

Language as a Social and Political Factor in Europe. By STANLEY RUNDLE. *Faber.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Rundle begins by summarizing the "problem of language" and ends by discussing the possible solutions; but the most useful part of the book will be the long middle section describing the languages of Europe, country by country, with maps of the linguistic minority areas and details of the measures taken by governments. The treatment of the last is rather patchy; we hear nothing about what the British or French governments do. The Russians are given a big hand, and the illiberality of the Nazis is made clear; all details are pre-war. As the panorama unfolded I too began to feel illiberal; the complexity of the language maps implies a fearful amount of administrative nuisance, and it is assumed that the general public has to pay for

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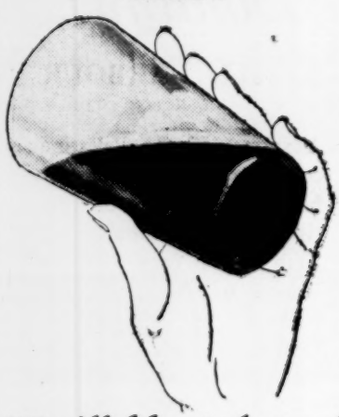

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the minority schools and the official interpreters. The details about how much was being done for linguistic minorities are more impressive than the reminders that it was not enough. The really wicked people in this account are the Italians, "both pre-fascist and fascist," in the Tyrol. All schools were closed or turned into completely Italian schools within five years of the annexation; students wishing to attend universities abroad were refused passports; the German language was prohibited in kindergartens and children's playrooms; instruction to more than three children at a time was punishable as a "secret school organisation"; instruction to one child in its native language required a government permit which was seldom granted. Any use of the German language in public or before the courts was made a penal offence, so that a counsel could not even ask his client a question in the language he understood during a trial. All documents and evidence in languages other than Italian were considered invalid. The term "south Tyrol" was itself forbidden. It is a maniac picture.

In the final section, "towards a solution," Mr. Rundle points out that a single world language would be harmful even if possible, but that agreement on an international auxiliary language of a suitable type would solve most of the difficulty. Esperanto is "worthy of very serious consideration." He suggests that three simple international languages should be devised, a pan-slav, a pan-teutonic and a pan-romance, which might be "constructed so that their structure would allow of fusion at a later date." This seems very little use, because all the areas of confusion he has examined include languages from more than one group.

He includes in this section an attack on Basic English, which he says changes radically the very structure of English, so that the Basic student would have a lot to unlearn when studying normal English. To prove this he argues on three occasions that you cannot say in Basic "I see the book," but must say "I have the book in sight." Here he is merely wrong; the verb "see" is in Basic. I should be prepared to agree that the Basic verb system needs loosening a bit for an international auxiliary language, though it is excellent as a first stage in learning English. But what is one to make of a long feverish attack which is merely wrong in its key assertion? He goes on to say that there are a lot more than 850 words in Basic, because there are grammatical forms (in verbs and pronouns), words added as international, compound words, the numbers, the months and the weekdays. He treats this as exposing a cheat, but it is announced on the piece of notepaper which carries the 850. The "international" and compound words which are needed are of course taught, not left to be guessed; the point of them is that many people would find them easier than the others to learn. It is merely wrong to say "*Cupboard* is expected to suggest its own meaning." If you add all the extras together they come to just around 150, making a thousand in all; this is still a small number. As to the extended meanings allowed for some of the words, and the rich uses of simple verbs with prepositions (*get money, get up, get over a disease*), they have got to be recognised early by anyone who is learning English; if you tried to leave them all out you really would be "changing the very structure." The whole attack, I think, is unscholarly and unreasonable.

W. EMPSON

NOVEL INTO PLAY

And He Did Hide Himself. By IGNAZIO SILONE. *Cape. 6s.*

"This play," says the publisher's note, "is inspired by the author's novel *Bread and Wine*." "Inspired," is the word, for it is not by any means a straightforward adaptation. Something has been added to the original and something taken away. The rich complexity of the novel might, one feels, have been translated into a richly complex play: one thinks of *Juno and the Paycock*. But that is not what Silone is now interested in. He says in his preface: "The characters of this drama are men of to-day, but they 'come from far and are going far.' They belong only incidentally to the chronicle of time." His peasants, therefore, are not primarily Italian peasants, but any peasants; his scene not necessarily Italy under Mussolini, but any oppressed country. To that extent, his theme, which is that of *Bread and Wine*, is generalised, which means that much has been lost. What is lost is the richness of life that characterised the novel, the deeply humorous, exuberant creation exemplified, for instance, in the old peasant Sciatàp ("Shut-up"), who beats his donkey to teach it that its name is Garibaldi and shouts, "On to Forty-second Street!" when war is declared on Abyssinia. It is precisely at the points where Silone remains most faithful to the novel that the play is least satisfactory. Sciatàp's cry, "To Forty-second Street!" remains, heard through a window, but it is now merely an oddly irrelevant funny line, because all that leads up to it, the marvellous scene in which the crowds of waiting peasants drown the loudspeaker with cries of *Duce! Duce!*, has gone. The great piling up of comic situation on comic situation is no more.

But the old passion and indignation remain, and what has been added is a much greater explicitness in the statement of the ideas that underlie *Bread and Wine*: "My idea as a simple comrade is that each of us should be the other's keeper, each of us is responsible for the other," or, as Silone puts it in his preface, "The rediscovery of a Christian heritage in the revolution of our time remains the most important gain that has been made in these last years for the conscience of our generation." It is significant that the incident that motivates the action of the play is new. Murica, who betrays his comrades to the police, is liberated from his fears and led to redemption through reading and pondering Spina's half-sentence, "The person who becomes aware of his humanity." That, indeed, is the text of the play, the demands that awareness of his humanity makes on a man. It is expounded with nobility and subtlety and, one would say, great dramatic power, though to be certain of that one must wait until it is staged. If one has to wait long it will be a reproach to the English theatre, for it is a most moving and impressive work. Meanwhile, it should be read, by none more than those who have been bamboozled by the Existentialists.

WALTER ALLEN

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No. 864

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Mr. Harold MacMillan, Conservative M.P. for Bromley, Kent, explained in wider terms, during the weekend, his speech at Hatfield, Herts, in which he spoke of a new democratic party. This organisation, he said, would include all men of good will of all parties, but would not be a breakaway from the Conservatives.—*Daily Mail*, 2nd. Sept.

The usual prizes are offered for an alternative name for the Conservative party (with supporting reasons) in a poem of not more than eight lines in the manner of W. S. Gilbert or Lewis Carroll, or in not more than fifty words of prose from a contemporary platform oration. Entries by September 17.

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